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A  
LETTER from ROME,

Shewing an exact CONFORMITY between

POPERY and PAGANISM:

O R,

The RELIGION of the Present ROMANS, derived  
from that of their HEATHEN ANCESTORS.

The FOURTH EDITION.

To which are added,

I. A PREFATORY DISCOURSE, containing an Answer to all the Objections of the Writer of a *Popish* Book, intituled, *The Catholic Christian instructed*, &c. with many new Facts and Testimonies, in farther confirmation of the general Argument of the LETTER.

A N D

II. A POSTSCRIPT, in which Mr. *Warburton's* Opinion concerning the *Paganism* of *Rome* is particularly considered.

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*Non necesse est fateri, partim horum errore susceptum esse, partim  
superstitione, multa fallendo.* Cic. de Divin. 2. 39.

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By *CONYERS MIDDLETON*, D. D.  
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L O N D O N: 122e

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To the Right Reverend Father in God,

**T H O M A S,**  
Lord Bishop of NORWICH.

My Lord,

**I**F the subject of the following sheets be not a sufficient plea, for addressing them to a person of Your Lordship's character, I can alledge another, which will give them a kind of right to Your protection ; that it is owing chiefly to Your authority, that they are now offered again to the public, in this new and different form ; enlarged with a Prefatory answer to the exceptions of a Popish Writer, who has charged them with falsehood and misrepresentation ; not in any of the facts, which they contain, but in the conclusions, deduced from those facts, to the dishonor of his Church. Your Lordship, who in every part of Your life has distinguished Yourself, by a just zeal against the Popish interest, thought it necessary for me, to take

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notice of an author, who has the hardiness, to revive an exploded cause, and to publish an elaborate defense of the Romish Church in our very Metropolis. Thus far however he must be allowed to act like a generous adversary, in referring the merit of his argument to the trial of the Press; which in all countries, where it can have it's free course, will ever be found the surest guardian of right and truth; and to which this particular country, among the many great blessings, which it enjoys, is manifestly indebted, for one of the greatest, *it's deliverance from a Popish Slavery*; as all our Histories testify, from the Reformation, down to this day. In the very infancy of printing amongst us, *Cardinal Wolsey* foresaw this effect of it; and in a Speech to the Clergy, publicly forewarned them, that *if they did not destroy the Press, the Press would destroy them.*

If my endeavours therefore should  
be



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be of any service, towards verifying the Cardinal's prediction ; or should in any degree answer Your Lordship's views, of giving some check to the restless spirit of *Rome*, which, how often soever repulsed, will always be renewing it's attacks, I shall gain the end, that I proposed by them. But while I was flattering myself with this hope, and fancying myself engaged in a laudable attempt, of disarming these professed enemies of our religion and liberty ; there were some, as Your Lordship knows, even of our own Church, whose displeasure I incurred, and whose resentment I have felt, on the account of this very work : who, from the different motives of party, or envy, or prejudices hastily conceived against me, were ready to join in any clamor, that could blast the credit of my performance. To such of these, as profess to act from any good principle, I have endeavoured to give some satisfaction in my Preface ; but  
my

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my chief comfort is, in this decline of life, that I can appeal to Your Lordship, who knew me from the beginning of it; and under all the attempts to depress my character, and all the suspicions of those, who were strangers to it, continued still to treat me with all the usual marks of Your friendship, as believing me incapable of harbouring any thought, or pursuing any design, which could be injurious to virtue, and true religion.

For Your Lordship had always too enlarged and liberal a way of thinking, to judge of men or things, by the narrow views, or prejudices of a party; and superior to all the impressions of envy or spleen, was ever ready to encourage merit, wherever You observed it. This has been Your constant rule of acting in the University; where, as a Governor of our Youth, You have lived an example of that discipline, which You enjoined to others; punctual in discharging all the duties of Your Station;

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tion; nor more forward to prescribe, than diligent to perform every thing, that tended to promote religion, good manners, and good learning.

These same qualities, which now exert themselves in a higher sphere, are acknowledged by the general voice of the Diocese, over which You preside: where all people loudly celebrate Your Lordship's unwearied application to the labors of Your Episcopal charge; Your continual care, as a common Pastor of all, to extend the benefits of it equally to all; Your beneficence to the poor, obliging behaviour to the rich; Your generous and hospitable table, open to all, who seek access to You; where You know, how to unite the character of the Gentleman, with that of the Prelate; to create an ease and chearfulness around You, and without descending from Your dignity, to enter into a familiarity with Your guests. By these arts, You have gained the affections both of Your  
Clergy



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Clergy and Laity ; and in a country, unhappily divided into parties, have effected, what was hardly thought possible, an agreement of all parties in their esteem and praises of Your Lordship. By such happy fruits of Your prudence, Your affability, and your moderation in governing, You have shewn, what are the most probable means of healing our public dissensions; and that the Church, in proportion as it has more such Bishops, will always have the fewer enemies.

That Your Lordship may long enjoy that peculiar vigor of mind and body, which has enabled You to discharge all the important offices, through which You have passed, with honor to Yourself and benefit to the public, is the sincere wish of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

most obliged and

faithful Servant,

CONYERS MIDDLETON.

## Prefatory Discourse.

A Late writer of a *Popish* book, intituled, *The Catholic Christian instructed*, &c. has thought fit, in a preface to that work, to attempt a confutation of my *Letter from Rome*; “ which every reader, *he says*, whether “ Protestant or Papist, would expect, “ that he should take some notice of, “ as it is directly levelled at their ceremonies, and has been so well received, as to pass through three “ Editions within the compass of a “ few years.”

I cannot think it strange, that a man, whose avowed design and sole employment amongst us is, to make converts to *the Romish Church*, should treat a work with some acrimony, that was published with no other view, than to blast his hopes, and

B                      obstruct





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“ none will pretend to be derived to  
“ them from the *Pagans*.” This is  
artfully thrown out, to confound  
the true state of the question ; and  
to prepossess the reader with a no-  
tion, that, instead of *Popery*, I am  
attacking Christianity itself, and  
sustaining the cause of Infidelity;  
not of Protestantism : but every  
man of sense will discern the fal-  
lacy, and observe, that it is *Po-  
pery* alone, with which I am en-  
gaged ; or that System of ceremonies  
and doctrines, which is peculiar to  
the *Romish Church*, as distinguished  
from other Christian Churches : the  
source of which I have undertaken  
to lay open, and by an historical de-  
duction of facts, to trace it's origin  
in a direct line, from *Pagan* down  
to *Popish Rome*.

In the farther support of this  
charge, I shall now procede to exa-  
mine our Author's exceptions to it,

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in the order as they lie in his Preface, and vindicate all the particular proofs of it, alledged in my Letter, to which he has thought proper to give any answer: the chief of which, as he tells us, are, “ Incense; Holy  
“ water; Lamps and Candles; Vo-  
“ tive offerings; Images; Chapels  
“ on the waysides and tops of Hills;  
“ Processions; Miracles [a].” On these I shall join issue with him; and endeavour to shew, that his defence of them is not onely frivolous and evasive, but tends rather to confirm, than to confute the inference, which I have drawn from them.

As to several of these articles, he makes one general Apology; that I  
“ am mistaken, in thinking every  
“ ceremony used by the Heathens, to  
“ be Heathenish, since the greatest  
“ part were borrowed from the wor-  
“ ship of the true God; in imitation

[a] Præf. ib. p. 4.

“ of

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“ of which, the Devil affected to  
“ have his Temples, Altars, Priests,  
“ and Sacrifices, and all other things,  
“ which were used in the true wor-  
“ ship.” This he applies to the case  
of *Incense, Lamps, Holy water, and*  
*Processions*; and adds, “ that if I  
“ had been as well read in the Scrip-  
“ tures, as I would seem to be in the  
“ Heathen Poets, I should have  
“ found the use of all these in the  
“ Temple of God, and that by  
“ God’s appointment [b].”

I shall not dispute with him about  
the origin of these rites; whether  
they were *first instituted by Moses*,  
or were of *prior use and antiquity*  
*among the Ægyptians*. The Scrip-  
tures favor the last; which our  
*Spencer* strongly asserts, and their  
*Calmet* and *Huetius* allow: but  
should we grant him all, that he can  
infer from his argument, what will

[b] *Ib.* 5, 8.



he gain by it? Were not all *those* *beggarly elements* wiped away by the spiritual worship of the Gospel? Were they not all annulled, on the account of *their weakness and unprofitableness*, by the more perfect revelation of *Jesus Christ* [c]? If then I should acknowledge my mistake, and recall my words; and instead of *Pagan*, call them *Jewish* ceremonies, would not the use of *Jewish rites* be abominable still in a *Christian Church*, where they are expressly abolished and prohibited by God himself?

But to pursue his argument a little farther: while the *Mosaic* worship subsisted by divine appointment in *Jerusalem*, the *Devil* likewise, as he tells us, *had Temples and Ceremonies of the same kind*, in order to draw Votaries to his Idolatrous worship: which, after the abolition of the

[c] Galat. iv. 9. Heb. vii. 18.

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*Jewish* Service, was carried on still with great pomp and splendor; and above all places, in *Rome*; the principal seat of his worldly Empire. Now it is certain, that in the early times of the Gospel, the Christians of *Rome* were celebrated for their zealous adherence to the faith of Christ, as it was delivered to them by the Apostles, pure from every mixture either of *Jewish* or *Heathenish* Superstition; till after a succession of ages, as they began gradually to deviate from that Apostolic simplicity, they introduced at different times into the Church the particular ceremonies in question. Whence then can we think it probable, that they should borrow them? From the *Jewish* or the *Pagan* ritual? From a Temple, remote, despised and demolished by the *Romans* themselves; or from Temples and Altars perpetually in their view, and subsisting in their streets; in which their An-

B 4.                      cestors

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cestors and Fellow-Citizens had constantly worshipped? The question can hardly admit any dispute: The humor of the people, as well as interest of a corrupted Priesthood would invite them, to adopt such rites, as were native to the soil, and found upon the place; and which long experience had shewn to be usefull, to the acquisition both of wealth and power. Thus by the most candid construction of this Author's reasoning, we must necessarily call their ceremonies *Jewish*; or by pushing it to it's full length, shall be obliged to call them, *Devilish*.

He observes; that I begin my charge with the use of *Incense*, as the most notorious proof of their Paganism, and, *like an artfull Rhetorician, place my strongest argument in the front* [d]. Yet he knows, that I have assigned a different reason, for

[d] Pref. p. 5.

offer-



offering that the first: because it is *the first thing*, that strikes the senses, and surprizes a stranger, upon his entrance into their Churches. But it shall be my strongest proof, if he will have it so, since he has brought nothing, I am sure, to weaken the force of it. He tells us, that there was *an Altar of Incense in the Temple of Jerusalem*; and is surprized therefore, how I can call it *Heathenish*: Yet it is evident, from the nature of that institution, that it was never designed to be perpetual; and that during it's continuance, God would never have approved *any other Altar*, either in *Jerusalem*, or any where else. But let him answer directly to this plain question; was there ever *a Temple in the world, not strictly Heathenish*, in which there were *several Altars, all smoaking with incense, within one view, and at one and the same time*? It is certain, that he must answer in the Negative:

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gative : Yet it is as certain, that there were many such Temples in *Pagan Rome* ; and are as many still in *Christian Rome* : and since there never was an example of it, but what was *Paganish*, before the times of *Popery*, how is it possible, that it could be derived to them from any other source ? or when we see so exact a resemblance in the copy ; how can there be any doubt about the original ?

What he alledges therefore in favor of *incense*, is nothing to the purpose ; “ that it was used in the Jewish, “ and is of great antiquity in the “ Christian Church ; and that it is “ mentioned with honor in the scriptures ; ” which frequently *compare it to prayer*, and speak of it’s *sweet odors ascending up to God* ; &c. which figurative expressions, he says, “ would “ never have been borrowed by the “ sacred Penmen from Heathenish  
super-

superstition [e]” : as if such allusions were less proper, or the thing itself less sweet, for it’s being applied to the purposes of Idolatry ; as it constantly was, in the times even of the *same Penmen*, and according to their own accounts, on *the Altars of Baal*, and the other *Heathen Idols* : and when *Jeremiah* rebukes the people of *Judah* for *burning incense to the Queen of heaven* [f], one can hardly help imagining, that he is prophetically pointing out the worship now paid to *the Virgin*; to whom they actually *burn incense* at this day under that very title [g].

But if it be a just ground for retaining a practice in *the Christian Church*, because it was enjoined to the *Jews*; what will our *Catholic* say for those usages, which were actually

[e] Pref. p. 6. [f] Jerem. xlv. 17. [g] Vid. Offic. Beatæ Virg. Salve Regina; Ave Regina cœlorum; Domina Angelorum, &c.



prohibited to the *Jews*, and never practised by any, but by the *Heathens*, and the *Papists*?---All the *Ægyptian Priests*, as *Herodotus* informs us, had their heads shaved and kept continually bald [b]. Thus the Emperor, *Commodus*, that he might be admitted into that order, got himself shaved, and carried the God *Anubis* in procession [i]. And it was on this account most probably, that the *Jewish Priests* were commanded, not to shave their heads, nor to make any baldness upon them [k]. Yet this pagan rasure, or tonsure, as they chuse to call it, on the crown of the head, has long been the distinguishing mark of the *Romish Priesthood*. It was on the same account, we may imagine, that the *Jewish Priests* were forbidden to make any cuttings

[b] *Herodot.* l. 2. 36.Qui grege linigero circumdatus & grege calvo. *Juv.* 6. 33.[i] *Sacra* *Isidis* coluit, ut & caput raderet & *Anubin* portaret. *Lamprid.* in *Commod.* 9. [k] *Levitic.* xxi. 5. *Ezech.* xlv. 20.

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*in their flesh* [1]; since that likewise was the common practice of certain *Priests, and Devotees among the Heathens*, in order to acquire the fame of a more exalted sanctity. Yet the same discipline, as I have shewn in my *Letter*, is constantly practised at *Rome*, in some of their solemn seasons and processions, in imitation of those *Pagan Enthusiasts*: as if they searched the Scriptures, to learn, not so much what was enjoined by the true religion, as what had been usefull at any time in a false one, to delude the multitude, and support an imposture.

Our Author makes the same apology for *Holy water*, that he has just made for *Incense*; that in the *Mosaic law*, we find the mention of a *water sanctified for religious uses*; which cannot therefore be called *Heathenish*; and that I might, with

[1] Levitic. xix. 28. xxi. 5.

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as good a grace, have proved *the Sacrament of Baptism to be Heathenish*, as their use of *Holy water* [m]. It is surprizing, to hear such a defense from any one, who calls himself a Christian. *The Sacrament of Baptism* was ordained by *Christ*, in the most solemn manner, and for the most solemn purpose, as the essential rite of our initiation into his Church; while there is not the least hint in any part of the Gospel, that *any other water* was either necessary, or proper, or usefull in any degree to the washing away of sin. But our Author's zeal seems to have carried him here beyond his prudence; and he forgets what ground he is treading, if he fancies, that he can defend, in this protestant country, what he might affirm with applause in a *popish*; that *the institutions of Christ* stand upon no better foundation,

[m] Pref. p. 7.

than



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than *the injunctions of the Pope*, or at least of *the Popish Church*.

I have mentioned one use of their *Holy water*, in a Festival at *Rome*, called *the Benediction of horses*, which seems to perplex him. He dares not deny the fact, yet labors to render it suspected, and declares ;  
“ that though he had spent the greatest part of his life abroad, he had never seen or heard of any such thing [n].” But whatever he thinks, or would seem rather to think of it, I know the thing to be true from the evidence of my own eyes: yet as I had no desire, that the reader should take my bare word for that, or any other fact in the Letter, I took care to add such testimonies of it, as every one will allow to be authentic. But if he really be a stranger to so extraordinary a practice, he must be an improper advocate of a cause, of

[n] Pref. p. 7.

which

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which he owns himself to be ignorant. The learned *Mabillon*, as I have observed, intimates his surprize at this, as well as many other parts of their worship, which he had never seen, till he travelled into *Italy*; but instead of defending, chuses either to drop them in silence, or to give them up as superstitious: which might have been the case also of our *Catholic*, if he had been better informed of the facts, which he has undertaken to vindicate. But if these men of learning, and teachers of Religion, know so little of what is done at *Rome*, how easy must it be, to impose upon *the poor Catholics in England*, and keep them in the dark, as to the more exceptionable parts of their worship, which are openly avowed and practised abroad, to the scandal of all the candid, and moderate even of their own communion.

But though our *Catholic* seems so much ashamed at present of *this Benediction of Horses, in their Church*, I can give him such light into the origin of it, as will make him proud of it probably for the future; from a story, that I have observed in St. *Jerom*; which shews it to be grounded on a *miracle*, and derived from a *Saint*: I mean St. *Hilarion*; the Founder of the *Monastic orders in Syria and Palæstine* [o].

The story is this: “ a Citizen of  
“ *Gaza*, a Christian, who kept a  
“ Stable of running horses for the  
“ *Circensian games*, was always  
“ beaten by his Antagonist, an Ido-  
“ later; the master of a rival stable.  
“ For the Idolater, by the help of  
“ certain charms, and diabolical im-

[o] Necdum enim tunc *Monasteria* erant in *Palæstina*; nec quisquam *Monachum* ante *Sanctum Hilarionem* in *Syria* noverat. Ille fundator & eruditor hujus conversationis & studii in hac provincia fuit. Hieron. Op. T. 4. par. 2. p. 78. Ed. Ben.

C

“ precatations,



“ precatons, constantly damped the  
“ spirits of the Christian’s horses,  
“ and added courage to his own.  
“ The Christian therefore in despair,  
“ applied himself to St. *Hilarion*,  
“ and implored his assistance: but  
“ *the Saint* was unwilling to enter  
“ into an affair so frivolous and pro-  
“ fane; till the Christian urging it  
“ as a necessary defense against these  
“ adversaries of God, whose insults  
“ were levelled not so much at him,  
“ as at the Church of Christ; and  
“ his entreaties being seconded by  
“ the Monks, who were present; the  
“ Saint ordered his earthen jugg,  
“ out of which he used to drink, to  
“ be filled with water and delivered  
“ to the man: who presently *sprink-*  
“ *led his Stable, his Horses, his*  
“ *Charioteers, his Chariot, and the*  
“ *very boundaries of the course with*  
“ *it.* Upon this, the whole City  
“ was in wondrous expectation: *the*  
“ *Idolaters* derided what the Chris-  
“ tian

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“ tian was doing ; while *the Chris-*  
“ *tians* took courage, and assured  
“ themselves of victory ; till the sig-  
“ nal being given for the race, the  
“ Christian’s horses seemed to fly,  
“ whilst the Idolater’s were laboring  
“ behind, and left quite out of fight ;  
“ so that *the Pagans* themselves were  
“ forced to cry out, *that their God*  
“ *Marnas was conquered at last by*  
“ *Christ* [*p*].” Thus this memo-  
rable Function, borrowed originally  
from the *Pagan Sprinklers of the*  
*Circensian games*, appears to be as  
ancient almost in the Church as  
*Monkery* itself, and one of the first  
inventions, for which *Popery* stands  
indebted to that religious institution.

As to *the Lamps and Candles*,  
which are constantly burning before  
the Altars of their Saints, he tells us  
once more ; “ that though the Devil  
“ had procured them to be set up in

[*p*] Ibid. p. 80.

“ his Temples, yet they were ap-  
 “ pointed originally by God for the  
 “ service of his Tabernacle; and  
 “ were not therefore borrowed from  
 “ the Heathenish, but the Mosaic  
 “ worship [q].” To which I need  
 not repeat, what I have already said  
 on the foregoing articles. I had  
 deduced the origin of these lamps  
 from *Ægypt*, upon the authority of  
*Clemens Alexandrinus*: but he de-  
 clares, that *Clemens says no such*  
*thing*; yet does not think fit to tell  
 us, what it is that he has said, nor  
 how near it approaches to the inter-  
 pretation, which I have given of it.  
*Clemens* expressly ascribes the inven-  
 tion of lamps to the *Ægyptians*, in  
 which he is followed by *Eusebius*;  
 and since lamps were used in all the  
*Pagan Temples* from the earliest  
 times, of which we have any notice,  
 I take it for a necessary consequence,  
 that the *Ægyptians* were the first,

[q] Pref. p. 8.

who



who made use of them likewise in their Temples. But let that be as it will, this at least is certain, that the use of them in Christian Churches was condemned by many of *the primitive Bishops and Presbyters*, as superstitious and Heathenish. But all these our *Catholic* makes no scruple to brand with the title of *Heretics* [r]; tho' many of them, perhaps, might more truly be called, *the Protestants of the primitive Church*; particularly *Vigilantius*; who, by all that I have been able to observe about him, incurred the Charge of *Heresy* for no other crime, than that of writing against "Monkery; the  
" Celibacy of the Clergy; praying  
" for the dead; worshipping the re-  
" liques of Martyrs; and lighting up  
" candles to them, after the manner  
" of the Pagans [s]." But *St. Jerom* has given the most rational de-

[r] Pref. p. 13. [s] Hieron. Oper. T. 4. part. 2. p. 275, 282. Edit. Benedict. it. Cave's Hist. Liter. par. 1.

finition of *Heresy*, where he says;  
 “ that those, who interpret Scripture  
 “ to any sense, repugnant to that of  
 “ the Holy Spirit, though they should  
 “ never withdraw themselves from  
 “ the Church, yet may be justly  
 “ called Heretics [t].” By which  
 Criterion, *the Romish Church* will be  
 found much more *Heretical*, than  
 any of those, who, either in ancient  
 or modern times, have separated them-  
 selves from it's communion on the  
 account of it's doctrines.

My next instance of their *Pagan-*  
*ism* is, the number of their *Donaria*  
*or Votive offerings*, hanging around  
*the Altars of their Saints*: where  
 our Author, having nothing to al-  
 ledge from Scripture, nor any ex-  
 ample from antiquity, but what is  
 purely *Heathenish*, is forced to change  
 his tone, and to declare; “ that  
 “ things innocent in themselves can-

[t] Hieron. *ibid.* par. 1. p. 302.

“ not

“ not be rendered unlawfull, for hav-  
“ ing been abused by the Heathens ;  
“ and that it cannot be disagreeable  
“ to the true God, that those, who  
“ believe themselves to have received  
“ favors from him by the prayers of  
“ his Saints, should make a public  
“ acknowledgement of it [*u*].” But  
can a practice be called innocent,  
which is a confessed copy of paganish  
Superstition ? which tends to weaken  
our dependence on God, and to  
place it on those, who are not pro-  
bably in a condition, either *to bear,*  
*or to help us* [*x*] ? which imprints  
the same veneration for *the Christian*  
*Saints*, that the *Pagans* paid to their  
*subordinate Deities* ; and transfers the  
honor due to God, to the Altars of  
departed mortals ? Such a worship, I  
say, so far from being innocent,  
must necessarily be condemned by  
all unprejudiced men, as profane and  
idolatrous ; as it will more evidently

[*u*] Pref. p. 9.

[*x*] Ecclesiast. ix. 5, 6.



appear to be, from our consideration of the next article, their *worship of Images*.

On this head, our Catholic pours out all his rage against me; charges me with “slander and misrepresentation, and notorious untruths; *says*, “that I am no better friend to Christianity, than to Popery; that I imitate the ancient Heretics, and copy my arguments from the Apostate *Julian* [y]:” by which he shews, in what manner he would silence me, if he had me under his discipline: but I can easily forgive his railing, while I find myself out of his power; and rejoice, that we live in a country, where he can use a liberty, which no *Popish* Government would indulge to a Protestant. The ground of all this clamor, is, my treating their *Image-worship, as Idolatrous*: yet he does not pretend to contradict

[y] Pref. p. 13.

my

my facts, but the inference onely, that I draw from them ; and since he cannot overthrow my premises, is the more enraged at my conclusion.

I had defined *Idols*, upon the authority of St. *Jerom*, to be *Images of the dead*: where he is simple enough to imagine, that I included in my definition, *all images and pictures whatsoever of the dead*; and calls it therefore *a brat of my own, which I falsely father upon St. Jerom* [z]. Yet every man must see, that I could mean no other *images*, but such, as I was there treating of; such, as had *Temples, Altars and a religious worship* instituted to them; for such are all the *Images of the Popish Church*; and of all such *Images of the dead*, I shall affirm again with St. *Jerom*, that they are true and proper *Idols*.

[z] Pref. p. 10.

It is not my present design to enter into a formal discussion of the nature of Idolatry ; which according to every sense of it, as our Divines have fully demonstrated, is now exercised in *Popish Rome*, upon the very same principles, on which it was formerly practised in *Pagan Rome*. The purpose of the following *Letter* is, to illustrate this argument by the more sensible evidence of fact ; and, in spite of the cavils and evasive distinctions of their Schools, to shew *their worship of Images or of Saints*, call it which they will, to be properly and actually idolatrous. But our Author defines *Idols*, “ to be  
“ such Images onely, as are set up for  
“ Gods, and honored as such ; or in  
“ which some divinity or power is be-  
“ lieved to reside by their worshippers ;  
“ who accordingly offer prayers and  
“ sacrifice to them, and put their  
“ trust



“ trust in them [a].” Such, says he, were the *Idols of the Gentiles*: and such, I shall venture to say, are the *Idols of the Papists*. For what else can we say of those *miraculous Images*, as they are called, in every great Town of *Italy*, but that some *Divinity* or *Power* is universally believed to reside in them? Are not all their people persuaded, and do not all their books testify, that these Images have sometimes *moved themselves* from one place to another; have *wept, talked, and wrought many miracles*? And does not this necessarily imply an *extraordinary power residing in them*? In the high street of *Loretto*, which leads to the *Holy House*, the shops are filled with *Beads, Crucifixes, Agnus’s Dei’s*, and all the trinkets of *Popish* manufacture; where I observed *printed certificates*, or testimonials, affixed to each shop, declaring all their toys to have been

[a] Pref. p. 11.

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*touched by the blessed Image*: which certificates are provided for no other purpose, but to humor the general persuasion, both of the buyer and the seller, that *some virtue* is communicated by that touch, from a *power residing in the Image*.

In one of the Churches of *Lucca*, they shew an Image of *the Virgin with the Child Jesus* in her arms, of which they relate this Story, “ That  
“ a blaspheming Gamester, in rage  
“ and despair, took up a stone and  
“ threw it at the Infant; but the Vir-  
“ gin, to preserve him from the  
“ blow, which was levelled at his  
“ head, shifted him instantly from  
“ her right arm into the left, in  
“ which he is now held; while the  
“ blasphemer was swallowed up by  
“ the earth upon the spot; where  
“ the hole, which they declare to be  
“ unfathomable, is still kept open  
“ and enclosed only with a grate,  
“ just

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“ just before the Altar of the Image.  
“ The Virgin however received the  
“ blow upon her shoulder, whence  
“ the blood presently issued, which  
“ is preserved in a Chrystal, and  
“ produced, with the greatest cere-  
“ mony, by the Priest in his vest-  
“ ments, with tapers lighted, while  
“ all the company kiss the sacred re-  
“ lique on their knees [b].” Now  
does not the attestation of this mi-  
racle naturally tend to persuade peo-  
ple, that there is an *actual power re-*  
*siding in the Image*, which can defend  
itself from injuries, and inflict ven-  
geance on all, who dare to insult it?

One of the most celebrated *Images*  
*in Italy* is that of *St. Dominic*, of  
*Surriano in Calabria*, which, as  
their histories testify, was brought  
down from heaven about two centu-  
ries ago, by *the Virgin Mary* in per-  
son, accompanied by *Mary Magda-*

[b] See Mr. *Wright's Travels at Lucca.*



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*lene and St. Catharine.* Before this glorious picture, as they affirm, “ great numbers of the dead have “ been restored to life, and hundreds “ from the agonies of death; the “ dumb, the blind, the deaf, the “ lame have been cured, and all “ sorts of diseases and mortal wounds “ miraculously healed:” all which facts are attested by public Notaries; and confirmed by the relations of Cardinals, Prelates, Generals and Priors of that Order; and the certainty of them so generally believed, that from the 9th of *July* to the 9th of *August*, the anniversary Festival of the Saint, they have always counted *above a hundred thousand Pilgrims*, and many of them of the highest quality, who come from different parts of *Europe*, to pay their devotions, and make their offerings to this picture [c].

[c] *La vie de St. Dominic.* p. 599. 4<sup>to</sup>. a Paris. 1647. it. p. 602.

*Aringbus,*

*Aringhus*, touching upon this subject, in his elaborate account of *Subterraneous Rome*, observes; “ that  
“ *the Images of the blessed Virgin*  
“ *shine out continually by new and*  
“ *dayly miracles, to the comfort of*  
“ *their votaries, and the confusion of*  
“ *all gainsayers.* Within these few  
“ years, says he, under every Pope  
“ successively, some or other of our  
“ sacred Images, especially of the  
“ more ancient, have made them-  
“ selves illustrious, and acquired a  
“ peculiar worship and veneration  
“ by the exhibition of fresh signs;  
“ as it is notorious to all, who dwell  
“ in this City. But how can I pass  
“ over in silence the Image of St.  
“ *Dominic*; so conspicuous at this  
“ day for it’s never-ceasing miracles;  
“ which attract the resort and ad-  
“ miration of the whole Christian  
“ world. This picture, which as  
“ pious tradition informs us, was  
“ brought

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“ brought down from heaven, about  
“ the year of our redemption, 1530,  
“ is a most solid bulwark of the  
“ Church of Christ, and a noble mo-  
“ nument of the pure faith of Christi-  
“ ans, against all the impious opposers  
“ of Image worship. The venerable  
“ Image is drawn indeed but rudely,  
“ without the help of art or pencil;  
“ sketched out by a cœlestial hand;  
“ with a book in it's right, and a  
“ lily in his left hand; of a mode-  
“ rate stature, but of a grave and  
“ comely aspect; with a robe reach-  
“ ing down to the heels. Those,  
“ who have written it's history, as-  
“ sert, that the Painters, in their  
“ attempts to copy it, have not al-  
“ ways been able to take similar  
“ copies; because it frequently as-  
“ sumes a different air, and rays of  
“ light have been seen by some to  
“ issue from it's countenance; and  
“ it has more than once removed it-  
“ self from one place to another.  
“ The



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“ The worship therefore of this  
“ picture is become so famous through  
“ all Christendom, that multitudes  
“ of people, to the number of *a*  
“ *hundred thousand and upwards,*  
“ flock annually to pay their devo-  
“ tions to it, on the Festival of the  
“ Saint: and though it be strange,  
“ which I have now related, yet  
“ what I am going to say is still  
“ stranger, that not onely *the ori-*  
“ *ginal picture,* made not by human,  
“ but by heavenly hands, is cele-  
“ brated for it's dayly miracles, but  
“ even *the Copy* of it, which is pi-  
“ ously preserved in this City, in  
“ the Monastery called *St. Mary's*  
“ *above the Minerva,* is famous also  
“ in these our days for it's perpetual  
“ signs and wonders, as the number-  
“ less votive offerings hanging around  
“ it, and the bracelets and jewels  
“ which adorn it, testify [*d*].”

[*d*] Aring. Roma Subterranea. Tom. 2. p. 464. §

13.

D

All

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All their Apologists indeed declare, what our Catholic also says on this head, “ that they do not ascribe these  
 “ miracles to any power in the I-  
 “ mage itself, but to the power of  
 “ God, who is moved to work them  
 “ by the prayers and intercession of  
 “ his Saints, for the benefit of those,  
 “ who have sought that intercession  
 “ before their pictures or Images;  
 “ and in order to bear testimony to the  
 “ faith and practice of the Church  
 “ in this particular article [*e*].”  
 But how can we think it possible, that the Deity can be moved to exert his power so wonderfully for the confirmation of such ridiculous stories, *of pictures and statues sent down from heaven*; which while they blasphemously impute to the workmanship of *Saints, or Angels, or of God himself* [*f*], are yet always so rudely and contemptibly per-

[*e*] Cathol. Christ. p. 251.  
 θεοεικόντων. Euagr.

[*f*] Imaginem  
 formed,

formed, that a moderate artist on earth would be ashamed to call them his own? Or is it at all credible, that the Saints in heaven should be as busy and ambitious, as their votaries are on earth, to advance the peculiar honors of their several altars, by their continual intercessions at the throne of grace? Or that their whole care above, if they really have any, which reaches to things below, should be employed, not for the general advancement of religion and piety among men, but of their own private glory and worship, in preference to all their competitors? No; the absurdity of such notions and practices makes it necessary to believe, that they were all occasionally forged for the support of some lucrative scheme; or to revive the expiring credit of some favorite superstition, which had been found highly beneficial to the contrivers of such forgeries. For the very effect, of which they boast, as



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a proof of the miracle, betrays the fraud ; and *the multitude of pilgrims and offerings*, to which they appeal, instead of demonstrating the truth of the fact, does but expose the real ground of the imposture.

But to return to my Antagonist : if we should ask him once more, whether there ever was a Temple in the world, not purely heathenish, in which there were *any Images, erected on altars*, for the purpose of any religious worship whatsoever ; he must be obliged to answer in the negative. He would be forced likewise to confess, that there were many such Temples in *Pagan Rome*, and particularly *the Pantheon*, which remains still in *Christian Rome* ; on whose numerous altars as there formerly stood *the Images* of as many *Pagan Divi or Idols*, so there are now standing *the Images* of as many *Popish Divi or Saints* ; to whom the

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*present Romans* pay their vows and offer prayers, as their inclinations severally lead them to this or that particular Altar: And no man will pretend to say, that there is not *the greatest conformity* between the present and the ancient Temple; or that it would not be difficult to furnish out a private room more exactly to the taste of *the old Romans*, than this *Papish Church* stands now adorned with all the furniture of their *old Paganism*.

We are informed by *Plato*, that there were *Images* in the Temples of *Ægypt* from the earliest antiquity [g]: And it appears evidently from Scripture, that they subsisted there, as well as in *Palæstine*, before the time of *Moses*. The strict prohibition of them therefore to *the Jews*, while several other rites of the

[g] Plat. de Legib. l. 2. p. 656. Max. Tyr. Diff. 38.

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*Heathens* were indulged to them, in condescension to their peculiar circumstances and carnal affections, carries a strong intimation, that *Images* are of all things the most dangerous to true religion ; as tending naturally to corrupt it, by introducing Superstition and Idolatry into the worship of God. The *Christian Emperors*, as I have intimated in my Letter, strictly prohibited their *Pagan* Subjects, *to light up candles, offer incense, or hang up garlands to senseless Images* : For these were then reckoned the notorious acts of genuin *Paganism* ? Yet we now see all these very acts performed every day in *Popish* countries *to the Images of the Popish Saints*. In a word, since there never was *an Image* in the Temple of the true God, in any age of the world, yet a perpetual use of them in all the Temples of *the Heathens*, it is in vain, to dispute about their origin ; the  
thing



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thing is evident to a demonstration ; they must necessarily be derived to *the present Romans*, from those, who always used, and not from those, who always detested them ; that is, from their *Pagan*, not their *Christian Ancestors*. They may quibble therefore as long as they please ; and talk of *their Decrees and Canons*, contrived to amuse the public, and elude the arguments of Protestants, by subtle and specious distinctions ; while every Traveller, who sees what passes at the Shrine of any *celebrated Saint, or miraculous Image in Italy*, will be convinced by Ocular demonstration, that their people are trained, instructed, and encouraged to believe, that there is a divinity or power residing in those Images, and that they actually offer up prayers and put their trust in them.

For if there is no such belief amongst them, as this *Catholic* affirms,

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for what purpose do they expose *those Images* so solemnly, and carry them about *processionally*, on all occasions of public distress? Is there any charm in a block of wood or stone, to produce rain, or avert a pestilence? Or, can *senseless Images* have any influence towards moving the Will of God? No; their Priests are not so silly as to imagine it: the sole end of producing them is, not to move God, but the populace; to persuade the deluded multitude, that *there is a power in the Image*, that can draw down blessings upon them from Heaven: A doctrine, that repays all their pains of inculcating it, by a perpetual supply of wealth to the treasury of the Church. This therefore, as it appears from undeniable facts, is the universal belief of *all Popish Countries*; grounded, as they all assert, on the evidence of perpetual miracles, wrought by the particular agency of these *sacred Images*,

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*Images*, of which I could produce innumerable instances from their own books.

In a Collegiate Church of regular Canons, called *St. Mary of Impruneta*, about six miles from *Florence*, there is *a miraculaus picture of the Virgin Mary*, painted by *St. Luke*, and held in the greatest veneration through all *Tuscany*: Which, as oft as that State happens to be visited by any calamity, or involved in any peculiar danger, is sure to be brought out, and carried in procession through the streets of *Florence*; attended by the Prince himself, with all the Nobility, Magistrates and Clergy; where it has never failed to afford them present relief in their greatest difficulties. In testimony of which they produce authentic acts and records, confirmed by public Inscriptions, setting forth all the particular benefits miraculously obtained from each procession ;



sion ; and the several offerings made on that account to the *Sacred Image*, for many centuries past, down to these very times : from the notoriety of which facts it became a proverb over *Italy*, that *the Florentines had got a Madonna, which did for them, whatever they pleased* [b].

Among the numerous Inscriptions of this sort, there is one in the Church of *Impruneta*, to this effect ; “ That the sacred Image  
 “ being carried with solemn pomp  
 “ into *Florence*, when it was visited  
 “ by a pestilence for three years successively, and received with pious  
 “ zeal by the great Duke, *Ferdinand II*, and the whole body of  
 “ the people, who came out to  
 “ meet it, and having marched about

[b] Vid. *Memorie Istoriche della Miracolosa Immagine, &c.* in *Firen.* 1714. 4<sup>to</sup>. passò in proverbio per tutta l'*Italia* ; che i *Fiorentini* hanno una *Madonna*, che fa a lor modo. ib. p. 85.

“ the

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“ the City for three days in proces-  
“ sion, the fierceness of the pesti-  
“ lence began miraculously to abate,  
“ and soon after intirely ceased.  
“ Upon which the Magistrates of  
“ health, by a general vow of the  
“ Citizens, made an offering of ten  
“ thousand ducats of gold, to be  
“ employed in providing portions  
“ for twenty young women of *Im-*  
“ *pruneta* to be disposed of annu-  
“ ally in marriage, and placed that  
“ Inscription as a Monument of so  
“ signal a benefit. A. D. 1633. [i].

During the time of these proces-  
sions, they always inscribe certain  
hymns, or prayers, or elogiums of  
the Virgin, over the doors and other  
conspicuous places of each Church,  
where the Image reposes itself for  
any time; in order to raise the de-  
votion of the people towards the

[i] Ibid. p. 202.

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sacred object before them. In a procession made A. D. 1711, the following Inscription was placed over the principal gate of one of their great Churches.—“ The Gate of cœlestial  
“ benefit. The Gate of Salvation.  
“ Look up to the Virgin Herself.  
“ Pass in to me all ye, who desire  
“ me.—Whosoever shall find me,  
“ will find life and draw Salvation  
“ from the Lord. For there is no  
“ one, who can be saved, O most  
“ Holy Virgin, but through Thee.  
“ There is no one, who can be delivered  
“ from evils, but through  
“ Thee. There is no one, from  
“ whom we can obtain mercy, but  
“ through Thee.”--In the conclusion  
are these expressions.--“ *Mary* indeed  
“ opens the bosom of her mercy to  
“ all; so that the whole Universe  
“ receives out of her fullness. The  
“ Captive, redemption; the Sick, a  
“ cure; the Sad, comfort; the Sinner,  
“ pardon; the Just, grace; the  
“ Angel,



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“ Angel, joy ; the whole Trinity,  
 “ glory [k].” Now what can we  
 say of a devotion so extravagant,  
 and blasphemous, but that it is a re-  
 vival of *the old Heresy of the Colly-*  
*ridians* ; maintained by a *sect of*  
*filly women* ; who fell into their *fool-*  
*ish error or madness*, as *Epiphanius*  
 calls it, *through an excess of zeal to-*  
*wards the blessed Virgin*, whom they  
 resolved to advance into a *Goddeſs*,  
 and to introduce the worship of  
 Her as such into the Christian  
 Church [l]. I can-

[k] Janua cœlestis beneficii. Janua Salutis. Ipsam  
 Virginem attendite. Transite ad me omnes qui concu-  
 piscitis me.—Qui me invenerit inveniet vitam et hauriet  
 salutem a Domino. Nemo enim est qui salvus fiat, O  
 Sanctissima nisi per Te. Nemo est qui liberetur a ma-  
 lis nisi per Te. Nemo est cujus misereatur gratia nisi  
 per Te.—

Maria profecto omnibus misericordiæ finem aperit ut  
 de plenitudine ejus accipiant Universi. Captivus re-  
 demptionem, Æger curationem, Tristis consolationem,  
 Peccator veniam, Justus gratiam, Angelus lætitiā,  
 tota Trinitas gloriam. Ibid. 234.

[l] Οὗτοι γὰρ οἱ τὸτο διδάσκαλοι τίνες εἰσὶ, ἀλλ' ἡ γυναι-  
 κίς ; — Καὶ αὐτὸ γὰρ ἔδοξεν ἀπὸ γυναικῶν ὁ Διάβολος  
 ἰξεμεῖν.

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I cannot dismiss the story of *this wonderfull picture*, without giving the reader some account of it's origin, as it is delivered by their writers, not grounded, as they say, on vulgar fame, but on public records, and histories, confirmed by a perpetual series of miracles---“ When the Inhabitants of *Impruneta* had resolved to build a Church to the Virgin, and were digging the foundations of it with great zeal, on a spot marked out to them by heaven ; one of the laborers happened to strike his pickax against something under ground, from which there issued presently a complaining voice or groan. The workmen, being greatly amazed, put a stop to their work for a while, but having recovered their spirits after some pause, they

ἐξερμην. Eph. adv. Hær. Vol. I. p. 1058. Edit. Par. 1622.  
 ἀλλ' διὰ ταύτην παρυσάγειν ἰσχυράκτας, καὶ σπυδαζούσας, &c.  
 ibid. p. 1054.

“ ventured

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“ ventured to open the place, from  
“ which the voice came, and found  
“ the miraculous Image [*m*].” This  
calls to my mind a *Pagan* Story, of  
the same stamp, and in the same  
country, preserved to us by *Cicero*,  
concerning the origin of Divination.  
“ That a man being at plough in a  
“ certain field of *Etruria*, and hap-  
“ pening to strike his plough some-  
“ what deeper than ordinary, there  
“ started up before him out of the  
“ furrow, a Deity, whom they cal-  
“ led *Tages*. The ploughman ter-  
“ rified by so strange an apparition,  
“ made such an outcry, that he a-  
“ larmed all his neighbours, and in  
“ a short time drew the whole coun-  
“ try around him ; to whom the  
“ God, in the hearing of them all,  
“ explained the whole art and my-  
“ stery of divination : which all  
“ their writers and records affirmed,

[*m*] Ibid. p. 53. &c.

“ to



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“ to be the genuin origin of that  
“ discipline, for which the old *Tus-*  
“ *cans* were afterwards so famous.”

Now these two stories, forged at different times, in the same country, and for the same end of supporting an Idolatrous worship, bear such a resemblance to each other, that every one will see the one to have been a bungling imitation of the other ; and we may say of *the Popish Madonna*, what *Cicero* says of *the Pagan Tages*, that none can be so silly as to believe that a God was ever dug out of the ground ; and that an attempt to confute such stories would be as silly as to believe them [n]. My design therefore in collecting them was not, so much to expose the folly of them to my Protestant readers, as to admonish our Papists, by unquestionable facts and instances, drawn from the present

[n] Cic. de Divin. 2. 23.

practice of *Rome*, into what a labyrinth of folly and impiety their principles will naturally lead them, when they are pushed to their full length, and exerted without reserve or restraint; and to lay before them the forgeries and impostures which are practised in their Church, to support the absurd doctrines, which she imposes, as the necessary terms of Catholic communion.

But their constant method of recurring to different Saints in their different exigencies, is nothing else, as many writers have observed, but an exact copy of the *Pagan* superstition, grounded on a popular belief, that their Saints, like the old Dæmons, have each their *distinct provinces*, or *præfectures* assigned to them; some over particular countries, cities, societies, and even the different trades of men; others over the several diseases of the body, or

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the

1 *A Prefatory Discourse.*

the mind ; others over the winds, the rain, and various fruits of the earth [o]. So that God's rebuke to the Apostatizing Jews, is full as applicable to the Papists, for committing whoredoms with their Idols, and saying, *I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water ; my wooll and my flax ; mine oil and my drink---*for they did not know, that I gave them their corn and wine and oil, and multiplied their silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal [p].

Our Catholic procedes to affirm, that all the devotion paid to their Saints extends no farther, than to desire their prayers ; and that the pictures and Images of them, which we see in their Churches, are no more than mere memorials, designed to express the esteem, which they retain for

[o] Orig. con. Cels. 8. p. 399. See Conformity of anc. and mod. ceremon. p. 112. &c. [p] Hosea ii. 5, 7.



*the persons so represented; or as helps to raise their affections to heavenly things; and that every child amongst them knows this to be true [q]. Yet I have demonstrated, from their public Inscriptions, as well as the explicit testimonies of their writers, that those Images are placed by them in their Churches, as the proper objects of religious adoration; and that they ascribe to their Divi, or Saints, who are represented by them, the very same titles, powers and attributes, which the Heathens ascribed to their Deities; invoking them as Tutelary Divinities; as presiding over their Temples, and the affairs of men; as most powerfull, invincible, and always ready to help and relieve their votaries [r]. All which is confirmed by the constant stile of their prayers, and the express language of their Liturgies, Missals and Breviaries, set forth at*

[q] Præf. p. 9, 10, 12. [r] See Letter, p. 42, p. 43.

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*Rome* by public authority : in which the *Virgin* is called, the mother of mercy, *Hope of the world*, the onely trust of *Sinners* ; and the *Saints* addressed to under the titles of *Intercessors*, *Protectors* and *Dispensers of Grace*. *Maldonatus* calls it an impious and silly error of the *Protestants*, to think that no religious worship is due to any, but to *God*. And some of their expurgatory *Indexes* go so far, as to expunge all those passages of the *Primitive Fathers*, which teach, that creatures ought not to be adored [s].

The *Abbot de Marolles* relates a conversation, in which he was once engaged, with a *Capuchin*, who had been employed in several missions, and a celebrated Preacher of *France* ; in the presence of an *Hugonot* Gen-

[s] *Salve Regina* ; *Mater misericordiæ*, *vita*, *dulcedo*, & *spes nostra*, *salve*. *Ad Te clamamus exules filii Evæ*, &c. *Offic. Beat. Virg. Maldonat. in Mat. v. 35. Index Expurgat. Madrid. 1612.*

tleman ;

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tleman ; for whose sake *the Abbot*  
took occasion to speak of *Images* in  
the same moderate strain, in which  
our *Catholic* thinks fit to treat them  
in his present address to Protestants ;  
“ That they were placed in their  
“ Churches, not for the people  
“ to adore, or put their trust in  
“ them, but to edify their senses,  
“ by the representation of holy  
“ things. But the *Abbot's* discourse  
“ gave offence both to *the Frier and*  
“ *the Preacher* ; they insisted on a  
“ higher degree of veneration, urged  
“ the stories of their *miraculous I-*  
“ *images*, and the extraordinary de-  
“ votion, that was paid by the Pope,  
“ the Bishops, and the whole Church  
“ to some of them, which had been  
“ known to speak, or were brought  
“ down from heaven, or made by  
“ the hands of Apostles and Angels ;  
“ or had been consecrated on the ac-  
“ count of some *particular Virtues*,  
“ and were carried for that reason in



“ processions, and worshipped on  
 “ Altars, as well as the sacred re-  
 “ liques ; whose miracles could not  
 “ be contested by any, but *obstinate*  
 “ *Heretics*, who would sooner re-  
 “ nounce the testimony of their  
 “ senses, than be convinced of their  
 “ errors. In short ; the Capuchin  
 “ declared, that the authority of the  
 “ Church was the sole rule of faith ;  
 “ and that to resist it, was a manifest  
 “ rebellion, and worthy of the last pu-  
 “ nishment [t].” And this opinion af-  
 ter

[t] Mais tout ce discours ne plut pas encore au Religi-  
 eux, ni mesmes a M. Herfaut, qui vouloit quelque chose  
 de plus ; pour preuve de quoy, l'un & l'autre mirent en  
 avant les Images miraculeuses, & marquerent mesmes les  
 respects extraordinaires, que le S. Pere, les Evesques, &  
 toute l'Eglise rendent a quelques unes, qui ont parlè,  
 ou qui sont descendues du Ciel, ont qui ont etè façonnées  
 de la propre main des Apostres, & des Anges, ou qui  
 sont consacrées pour *quelque vertu particuliere*, lesquelles  
 a cause de cela se portent en procession & sont reverées  
 sur les Autels, aussi bien que les saintes Reliques, dont  
 les miracles ne peuvent estre contestez, que par les He-  
 retiques opiniaftres, qui combattent mesmes le tesmoignage  
 des sens, quand il s'agit de la conviction de leur er-  
 reur

ter all, maintained by the *Frier*, is the genuin notion of *Image-worship*, which prevails at this day in the *Romish Church*; and especially in *Italy*, as I have fully demonstrated by the facts above recited.

I have said in my *Letter*, that several of the *Ancient Heros* were more worthy of veneration, than some of the modern *Saints*, who have dispossessed them of their *Shrines*; and that I should sooner pay divine honors to the *Founders of Empires*, than to the *Founders of Monasteries*. This our Author aggravates into a heavy charge against me; as if I were offended, to see the *Heathen Temples converted into Christian Churches*, and had actually preferred the *Pagan Deities*,

reur—Le Capucin estima, qu'il falloit defendre tout ce qui l' Eglise reçoit; — que cela seul estoit la regle de la foy: & que ce seroit une rebellion manifeste d'y resister; ce qui ne seroit digne de rien moins, que du dernier chastiment.—Memoires de M. de Marolles. par. 1. p. 146.

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*before the Martyrs of Christ* [u]. Where according to his custom, he either widely mistakes, or willfully misrepresents my meaning ; for as *to the genuin Saints and Martyrs of the Christian Church*, that is, all those, who, in past ages, have lived agreeably to the rules of the Gospel, or died in the defence of it, I reverence them as highly, as they ought to be revered by any Christian, yet shall never be induced to worship them : I consider them as illustrious proofs of the excellence of the Christian doctrine ; and shining examples of piety and fortitude to all succeeding ages. But as for *the Popish Saints*, I believe several of them to be wholly fictitious ; many more to have spent their lives contemptibly ; and some of them even wickedly : And out of these three Classes, let our Author chuse where he will ;

[u] Pref. p. 12, 13.



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out of *the fictitious, the contemptible, or the wicked*; I shall venture to affirm once more, that I would sooner worship *Romulus*, or *Antonine*, than any of them; sooner pay my devotion to the *Founders*, than to the *disturbers of kingdoms*; sooner to the *Benefactors*, than to the *persecutors of mankind*; and this is the whole, that I have ever meant.

But our Author calls it a notorious falsehood to say, “ that many of  
“ their Saints were never heard of  
“ but in their Legends; or had no  
“ other merit but of throwing king-  
“ doms into convulsions, for the sake  
“ of some gainfull imposture [*x*]:”  
Yet I have produced several instances of the first sort, which every reasonable man must think decisive; in the case of *Evodia*, *St. Viar*, *Amphibolus*, *Veronica*: but *no such Saints*, he says, *were ever honored in their*

[*x*] Pref. p. 14.

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*Church* : by which he means nothing more, as he himself explains it, than, that they never were *formally canonized, and entered into the Roman Martyrology* [y]; which is nothing to the purpose; since, as I have shewn from unquestionable authority, they were all honored with *Altars and Images, and openly worshipped in Catholic Countries, as Saints and Martyrs*; and that *Veronica* in particular, though the name onely of a *picture*, was advanced into a *person*, by the Authority of *Pope Urban*; and placed as such upon an Altar, in the face of all Christendom, in *St. Peter's at Rome* [z]. Yet all men, who know any thing of History, either sacred or profane, must necessarily be convinced, that the whole story, not onely of *the Saint*, but of *the picture also*, which they expose on certain Festivals with the greatest pomp,

[y] Pref. p. 14, 15.

[z] See Letter, p. 38, 39.  
and

and for the original of which different Cities contend, is a mere cheat and forgery.

It is a thing confessed, and lamented by the gravest of their own Communion, that the names and worship of *many pretended Saints*, who never had a real existence, had been fraudulently imposed upon the Church. The celebrated Dr. *John de Launoy*, was famous for clearing the Calendar of several, who had long been worshiped in *France*, as the *Tutelary Divi* of some of their principal Towns: so that it used to be said of him, “ that there never “ passed a year, in which he did “ not pluck a Saint out of Paradise [a].” In *the Catacombs of Rome*, which, in the times of *Heathenism*, was the burial place of the slaves, and poorer Citizens, and where the bones of *Pagans and Christians*

[a] Bayle Dict. in Launoy.



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lie jumbled promiscuously together, if they happen to find *a little vial, or piece of glass tinged with red*, at the mouth of any particular hole, they take it presently, as the learned *Montfaucon* informs us, for a certain proof of *Martyrdom*; and by the help of the next inscription, that they can pick up from some neighbouring Grave-stone, presently create a *new Saint and Martyr to the Popish Church*. *Mabillon*, as I have observed, wishes, “ that they would be more  
 “ scrupulous on this head; and not  
 “ forge so many fabulous stories of  
 “ Saints, without any certain name;  
 “ nor impose Paganish inscriptions  
 “ for Christian upon the Church [b].”

Our *Catholic* himself, in this very work, where he is laboring to give the most specious turn to every part of their worship, is forced to allow such a confusion and jumble among the *Martyrs and their reliques*, as ap-

[b] *Mabill. Iter. Ital.* p. 225.

“ proaches.

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proaches very nearly to what I am now affirming: he says, “ that many  
“ of their Saints having born the same  
“ name, it easily happens, that the  
“ reliques, which belong to one,  
“ are attributed to another, and that  
“ there are many ancient Martyrs,  
“ whose names at present are un-  
“ known, yet whose reliques have  
“ all along been honored in the  
“ Church; and that it was easy for  
“ the ignorance of some, or the va-  
“ nity of others, to attribute to them  
“ the names of other Saints [c]”

*The old Athenians were called superstitious by the Apostle, for erecting an Altar to the unknown God; but our Papists, we see, by their own confession, erect Altars to unknown Saints, and unknown reliques.*

Upon the mention of these *reliques*, I cannot help observing, that *the superstitious veneration and solemn translations* of them, which

[c] Cathol. Christian. p. 246.

make





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“ mation about it, he happened to  
“ espy an Eagle upon a rising ground,  
“ pecking the earth with it's beak  
“ and tearing it up with it's talons;  
“ and conceiving this to be a divine  
“ omen and sign to him, he began  
“ immediately to dig, and found  
“ the Coffin of a man of more than  
“ ordinary size, with a brazen lance  
“ and sword lying by him; all  
“ which he took away with him in-  
“ to his Galley, and transported to  
“ *Athens*; where the whole body  
“ of the people, upon notice of his  
“ arrival, came out to receive the  
“ *sacred reliques, in a solemn and pom-*  
“ *pous procession*, performing public  
“ sacrifices, and expressing all the same  
“ marks of joy, as if *Theseus* himself  
“ had been returning to them alive.  
“ They interred his bones in the  
“ midst of the City, where his Se-  
“ pulcher is still a Sanctuary for  
“ Slaves and the meaner Citizens;  
“ *Theseus* having always been esteem-  
“ ed

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“ ed a particular Patron of the poor  
“ and distressed. The chief *Festi-*  
“ *val*, which they celebrate annu-  
“ ally to his honor, is *the 8th of*  
“ *October*; on which he returned  
“ victorious from *Crete* with the  
“ young Captives of *Athens*, yet  
“ they observe likewise *the 8th of*  
“ every month, as a kind of inferior  
“ Holyday or memorial of him [*d*].”

But to pursue the objections of our *Catholic*; he declares my account of *St. Oreste*, whose name I suppose to have been derived from the mountain *Soracte*, on which his *Monastery* now stands; to be ridiculous beyond measure: yet *Mr. Addison*, who was no ridiculous Author, has related it as a certain fact; which he borrowed probably from some of their own writers, or at least from some of the Antiquaries of *Rome*, among whom I heard the same story. But if the

[*d*] Plutar. in Thef. ad fin.

notion

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notion of *fictitious Saints*, be so notoriously false, as he asserts it to be, let him tell us, if he can, in what History we may find the acts of those very Saints, whom I have named, and whom their Church adopts as genuin, *St. Oreste, Baccho, Quirinus, Romula, and Redempta, Concordia, Nympha, Mercurius* [e].

The creation of *Saints* is become as common almost, as the creation of Cardinals; there having seldom been a Pope, who did not add some to the Calendar. *Benedict XIIIth* canonized eight, in one Summer; and his Successor *Clement XIIth*, the last Pope, four more. During my stay at *Rome*, I saw the *Beatification* of one *Andrew Conti*, of the family of the Pope, then reigning, *Innocent XIIIth*; for this is another source of supplying *fresh Saints to the Church*; when to humor the ambition of the

[e] See Letter, p. 37, 38.



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Pope, or the other Princes of that Communion, this honor is conferred on some of their name and family : and as there must be a testimony of miracles, wrought by every person *so canonized or beatified*, either when living or dead, so I was curious to inquire, what miracles were ascribed to this *beatified Andrew* ; which I found to be nothing else, but a few contemptible stories, delivered down by tradition, which shewed onely the weakness of the man, and the absurdity of believing, that God should exert his omnipotence for the production of such trifles [*f*].

As

[*f*] The *Papists*, in their versions of the Scriptures into the modern tongues, have contrived, by various falsifications, to make them speak the language of their *Missals and Breviaries*, in order to sanctify their novel rites by the authority of the Apostles ; and make the people believe, that they had been practised from the times even of the Gospel. Thus to countenance this practice of *beatifying or making Saints* in the Church, they have rendered a passage of *St. James c. v. 11*, not as it ought to be, *behold how we account those blessed ;*  
but,

As to the proof of miracles, which is essential to these *Canonizations*, every one will conceive, how easy it must be in a function, contrived to serve the interest of the Church, and the ambition of it's rulers, to procure such a testimonial of them, as will be sufficient for the purpose. In the *Deifications of ancient Rome*, the attestation also of a miracle was held necessary to the act. In the Case of *Romulus*, one *Julius Proculus*, a man said to be of a worthy and up-

but, behold how we BEATIFY those, who have suffered with constancy: and in favor also of their processions; where it is said, Heb. xi. 30; that the walls of Jericho fell down, after they compassed it about seven days; their versions render it, after A PROCESSION of seven days around it. And to give the better color to their trade of Pilgrimages, St. Paul, according to their versions, requires it, as the qualification of a good widow, that she have lodged PILGRIMS, 1 Tim. v. 10: and St. John praises Gaius, for having dealt faithfully with PILGRIMS—3 John Ver. 5. See a treatise entituled, *Popery an Enemy to Scripture*, where the learned and ingenious Author, Mr. Serces, has given a large collection of these falsifications, made to support their several frauds and innovations.

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right character, took a solemn oath, “ that *Romulus* himself appeared to “ him, and ordered him to inform “ the Senate, of his being called up “ to the assembly of the Gods, under the name of *Quirinus* [g];” and in *the Deification of the Cæsars*, a testimony upon Oath, of an *Eagle’s flying out of the funeral pile, towards heaven*, which was supposed to convey the soul of the deceased, was *the established proof of their Divinity* [h]. Now as these *pagan Deifications* are the onely patterns in history, for *the Popish Canonizations*; so the invention of miracles is the single art, in which *modern Rome* is allowed to excell *the ancient*.

In *the Jesuit’s College at St. Omer’s*, the Father, who shewed us the House, happening to produce some *relique*, or memorial of *St. Thomas*, which

[g] Vid. Plutar. in vit. Romuli. Dionys. Halicar. l. 2. p. 124. [h] Dio. Cass. p. 598, 842.



he treated with much reverence, one of our company asked me, what *Thomas* he meant; upon which I unwarily said, “ it is *Thomas Becket*, “ who is worshipped as a great Saint, “ on this side of the water:” yes, Sir, replied the Jesuit, with a severe look, *if there is any faith in history, he deserves to be esteemed a Great Saint.* But I may venture to affirm in *England*, what I did not care to dispute in a *College of Jesuits*, that this celebrated *Thomas* had more of *the rebel*, than of *the Saint* in him; was a Prelate of a most daring, turbulent, seditious spirit; inflexibly obstinate, insatiably ambitious, intolerably insolent; whose violence *the Pope* himself endeavoured in vain to moderate; as it appears from such monuments, as *the Papists* themselves must allow to be authentic, a collection of *Becket's own Letters*, preserved still in the

F 3                      *Vatican,*

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*Vatican*, and printed some years ago in *Brussels* [i].

From these Letters, I say, it appears, that not onely the King, and the whole body of his Barons, but even *the Bishops, Abbots, and Clergy*, openly condemned his behaviour as highly rash and criminal; they charged him with being the sole “disturber of the peace of the king-

[i] Prudentiam tuam monemus, consulimus & omnimodis exhortamur, ut——prænominato Regi in omnibus, & per omnia, salva honestate Ecclesiastici ordinis, deferre satagas, & ejus tibi gratiam, & amorem incessanter recuperare intendas, &c.

Alexander Papa Thomæ Cantuariensi Archiepiscopo, scripta Ann. 1164.

Discretionem tuam rogamus, monemus, consulimus, & suademus, ut in omnibus tuis & Ecclesiæ agendis te cautum, providum, & circumspectum exhibeas, & nihil propere vel præcipitanter, sed mature & graviter facias, ad gratiam & benevolentiam illustri Regis Anglorum recuperandam, quantum salva libertate Ecclesiæ, & honestate officii poterit, enitaris modis omnibus & labores.

Vid. Epist. & Vit. Div. Thomæ. 2. Vol. 4to. Bruxellis. 1682. l. 1. Ep. 4, 43.—it. vid. l. 2, 1, 94, &c.

“ dom ;

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“ dom [k] ; that while he was  
“ making all that stir about the liber-  
“ ties of the Church, he himself was  
“ the chief infringer of them ; that  
“ he was not ashamed to publish the  
“ most notorious lies in favor of his  
“ own cause ; that he refused to re-  
“ store to the King forty thousand  
“ marks, which had been commit-  
“ ted to him in trust [l] ; that he  
“ was guilty of the most detestable  
F 4 “ ingrati-

[k] Ad eundem diem ex præcepto Regio, Archiepiscopi, Episcopi, & cæteri Ecclesiarum Prælati convocantur.—constituta die Catholici Principis conspectui se præsentat Regni Turbator & Ecclesiæ. Qui de suorum meritorum qualitate non securus Dominicæ Crucis armat se vexillo, tanquam ad Tyranni præsentiam accessurus. Vid. ibid. l. 1. Ep. 29.

Alexandro Papæ & omnibus Cardinalibus Inimici Thomæ.

[l] Totis enim studiis Dominus Cantuariensis desudat, ut Dominum nostrum Regem anathemate, Regnumque ejus interdicti poena constringat. Potestatem, quam in ædificationem non in destructionem Ecclesiæ suscepisse oportuerat, sic exercet in subditos, ut omnes in Regis odium, & totius Regni Nobilium tentet inducere, & eorum substantiis direptionem, cervicibus gladium, aut corporibus



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“ ingratitude to the King, whom  
 “ he treated worse than a Heathen  
 “ or Publican, though he had been  
 “ raised by him from the lowest  
 “ condition, to the highest favor,  
 “ and entrusted by him with the  
 “ command of all his dominions,  
 “ and made his Chancellor, and  
 “ Archbishop of *Canterbury*, con-  
 “ trary to the advice of his Mother,  
 “ the Empress, and the remon-  
 “ strances of the Nobility; and to  
 “ the great grief and mortification of  
 “ the whole Clergy [*m*]:” all which  
 “ *the*

corporibus exilium intente studeat procurare.—Libertatem prædicat Ecclesiæ, quam se Cantuariensi Ecclesiæ viribus intrudendo sibi constat ademisse.—Notoria, quæ nec notâ, nec veritate subnixa sunt, asserat: & in hunc modum plurima, qua potest potestate, confundat. Ad hæc quadraginta marcarum millia, vel amplius, ut sui asserunt, bonæ suæ fidei commissa, Domino nostro Regi solvere, vel quod justum est, exhibere detrectat. Et Regi suo negat & Domino, quod nec Ethnicò denegare debuerat aut Publicano, &c. *ibid.* l. 2. Ep. 33.

Alexandro Papæ Episcopi & Clerus Angliæ.

[*m*] Infedit alte cunctorum mentibus, quam benignus vobis Dominus Rex noster extiterit, in quam vos gloriam

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*the Bishops and Clergy of the Realm* expressly affirm in their common Letters, not onely to *the Pope*, but to *Becket himself*; accusing him likewise of “traiterous practices, and “of using all endeavours to excite “the King of *France*, and the “Count of *Flanders*, to enter in- “to a war against his King and “Country [*n*].” When he was cited by the King, to answer for his male administration, before the Bishops and Barons of the Realm, he absolutely refused to appear; declaring

ab exili provexerit, & in familiarem gratiam tam lata vos mente susceperit, ut— & dissuadente Matre sua, Regno reclamante, Ecclesiâ Dei, quoad licuit, suspirante & ingemiscente, vos in eam, qua præestis, dignitatem, modis omnibus studuit sublimare, &c. *ibid.* l. 1. Ep. 126.

Thomæ Cantuariensi Archi-episcopo Clerus Angliæ.

[*n*] Afferebat Rex & suorum pars melior, quod idem Archi-episcopus serenissimum Regem Francorum in eum graviter incitaverat, & Comitem Flandrensem sanguineum suum, qui nullum prius gerebat rancorem, ad ipsum subito diffidandum, & guerram pro posse faciendam induxerat, sicut sibi pro certo constabat & evidentibus patebat indiciis. *ib.* l. 2. 28. Alexandro Papæ Wilhelmus & Otto Cardinales.

“ him-

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himself “ responsible to none but  
“ God ; and that as much as the soul  
“ was superior to the body, so much  
“ were all people obliged to obey  
“ him, rather than the King, in all  
“ things relating to God and his  
“ Church ; who had established Bi-  
“ shops to be the Judges and Fathers  
“ of Kings themselves: and as neither  
“ law nor reason allowed children  
“ to judge their parents, so he re-  
“ nounced the judgement of the  
“ Kings and the Barons, and all other  
“ persons whatsoever, and acknow-  
“ ledged no Judge, but God and his  
“ sovereign Vicar on earth, the  
“ Pope [o].” Yet this man is now  
adored, as one of the principal Saints  
and Martyrs of the *Romish* Church ;  
whose character I have chosen to in-  
sist upon the more particularly, as it  
will teach us by an illustrious example,  
from our own history, what kind of

[o] *La vie de Saint Thom. Archevesque de Cantorb.*  
p. 129.



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merit it is, that has exalted so many others in the same Church, to the same honors.

Let our *Catholic* tell us also if he pleases, what opinion his Church entertains of *Garnet the Jesuit*, who was privy to the *Gunpowder plot*, and hanged for his treason: if he dares to speak his mind, he will declare him to be *a Saint and Martyr of Christ*; for such he is held to be at *Rome and St. Omer's*: yet all Protestants will rank him, I dare say, among those Saints, whom I justly call *the disturbers of Kingdoms*; and who merited the honor of their *Sainthood*, not by spreading the light of the Gospel, but scattering Firebrands and destruction through the world.

Our Author cannot comprehend, why I should bring in the *adoration of the Host* among the other articles of my charge; since, by my own confession,  
I find

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I find no resemblance of it in any part of the *pagan* worship [*p*]: but I have given a good reason for my not finding it there, which might have taught him also, why I brought it in ; because it was too absurd for the practice even of *the Heathens* ; who thought, that none could ever be so mad, as to make it a point of religion, *to eat their God*. This I shewed from the authority of *Tully* ; whom *I prefer therefore*, he says, *to the Apostles and Evangelists* : as if those sacred writers had expressly declared *the sacramental bread, to be God* ; which all Protestants deny, in that gross and ridiculous sense, in which *the Papists* interpret them. But as it is not my present purpose to examine the real merit of *Transubstantiation*, so I shall take notice onely of one argument, that he alledges for it, which, if it has any force, must be allowed indeed to be conclusive ; that

[*p*] See Pref. p. 15.

“ the

“ the unerring authority of the Church  
“ has declared it to be true, and in-  
“ joined the belief of it ;” and after  
such a decision, “ that it is the part  
“ of an Infidel, rather than a Christi-  
“ an, to ask, how can this be ? [q]”

This is the last resort of *Popery* ;  
the sum of all their reasoning ; to  
resolve all religion into *an implicit*  
*faith*, and a slavish obedience to the  
authority of the Church ; which by  
*innumerable texts of Scripture*, says  
our Author, *is declared to be the in-*  
*dispensable duty of every Christian* [r].  
We may spare ourselves then the  
pains of thinking, and inquiring ;  
drop the perillous task of studying  
the Scriptures ; *the Church*, like an  
indulgent mother, takes all that  
trouble upon herself ; warrants her  
doctrines to be divine ; and ensures  
our salvation, on the single condi-

[q] See Catholic Christian, p. 32, 47, 52, 57.

[r] Ibid. p. 47.



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tion of taking her word for it. But all Protestants must see the horrible effects of such a principle; *an Inquisition* ready to satisfy all their doubts; a prison and tortures prepared for those, who dare to ask their priests, what *Nicodemus* asked our Saviour, *how can these things be?* Thus our *Catholic*, in mentioning the case of a Protestant, converted to their faith, who may happen to be possessed still with some scruples, declares, “ that  
“ he has nothing to fear in conform-  
“ ing himself to the authority of  
“ the Church, but very much, in  
“ making any scruple, to hear and  
“ obey his spiritual Guides [s].”

In this doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, we see a remarkable instance of the prolific nature of error; and how one absurdity naturally begets another: for the first consequence of

[s] *Ib.* p. 65, 66.

it was, to render one half of the sacramental institution superfluous, by *denying the Cup to the Laity*; though our Saviour expressly commanded *all his disciples to drink of it*, and declared, *that without drinking, they could have no Life in them* [t]. Yet grant them their *Transubstantiation*, and the conclusion is natural, as our *Catholic* has deduced it; “ for who-  
“ soever, *says he*, receives the body  
“ of Christ, most certainly receives  
“ his blood at the same time, since  
“ the body, which he receives, is a  
“ living body, and cannot be with-  
“ out Blood. There is no taking  
“ Christ by pieces; whoever receives  
“ him, receives him whole; and  
“ since he is as truly and really pre-  
“ sent in one kind, as in both, he  
“ brings with him consequently the  
“ same grace, when received in  
“ one kind, as when received in  
“ both [u].” But if they were dis-

[t] Matt. xxvi. 27. Joh. vi. 53. 1 Cor. xi. 23.

[u] Cathol. Christian, p. 64, 65.

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posed to use their reason on this occasion, a conclusion, so contradictory to the express institution of the Gospel, would convince them of the falsehood of those principles, by which they were led into it; and oblige them to distrust their premises, which have always been disputed, rather than reject a clear precept of *Christ*, on which there never was, or can be any reasonable dispute.

As to my 6th and 7th instances of *their Paganism*, since our *Catholic* has offered nothing upon them worth the pains of considering, I shall refer the reader to my *Letter*, without troubling him with any thing farther about them, and procede to the more important article of their *miracles*.

Here he begins to grow warm again, and declares, “ that I am always offended with miracles,  
“ wherever I meet with them; and  
“ is



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“ is sorry, that I do not speak out  
“ in favor of my friends the Free-  
“ thinkers, and shew the *Jewish* and  
“ *Christian* miracles to be no better,  
“ than those of the *Pagans* [*x*].”

This is the constant refuge of baffled zealots, to throw the odium of *infidelity and free thinking* on those, who dare to expose their impostures. But he hoped perhaps to find some even of our own Church ready to join with him in the cry ; since he appears to be no stranger to the offence, which the freedom of *this very Letter* had given to certain men, who are too apt to consider their own opinions, as the standard of Christian faith ; and to treat even the defenders of our religion, as desertors, if they do not submit to act under their direction, and defend it by their principles. These men imagined, that I had attacked *the popish miracles* with a gaiety, that seemed to

[*x*] Pref. p. 4, 17.

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contemn all miracles, and particularly those of *our Saviour*; by invalidating the force of *those rules*, which *Mr. Leslie* had established, as *the criterion of true miracles*: whereas the truth of the matter is, as I have often declared it to my friends, that at the time of writing *the Letter*, I had never read *Mr. Leslie's* treatise, nor so much as knew, *what his rules were*.

My onely view was, to expose the forgery of *the popish miracles* in the strongest manner that I was able; and in spite of all the evidence, which they pretend to produce for them, to shew, that they stood upon no better ground, than those of their *Pagan Ancestors*. I had observed, not onely from books, but from experience, what these Cavillers perhaps were not so well apprized of, that *the pretence of miracles* was the grand support of the *Romish Church*,  
and

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and what gave a sanction to all their other frauds ; that their constant appeal to a divine power, exerting itself miraculously amongst them, gave them not onely their chief advantage against protestants, but furnished *the Deists* also with the most obvious arguments against revelation itself : for “ these pious cheats, *as Mr. Leslie* “ *says*, are the forest disgraces of “ Christianity ; which have bid the “ fairest of any one contrivance, to “ overturn the certainty of the mi- “ racles of Christ, and the whole “ truth of the Gospel, by putting “ them all upon the same foot [y].”

To destroy the authority therefore of these cheats, was to sap the foundations of *Popery*, and overturn the main pillar, on which it's power subsists : which was the real motive of my dwelling *longer on this*, than on

[y] See *Leslie's* Short method with the Deists, p. 24. Vol. I. of his works.



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any other article, as our Catholic observes [z], as well as of treating it with that freedom, which alarmed even some of our Protestants.

That my sentiments therefore on this head may neither be mistaken, nor suspected ; and that I may give satisfaction, as far as I am able, to all, whom, by any freedom of expression, I may possibly have offended, either in this, or in any other of my writings, I take this occasion to declare ; that I look upon *miracles*, when accompanied with all the circumstances, proper to persuade us of the reality of the facts, said to be performed, and of the dignity of the end, for which they were performed, to be the most decisive proofs, that can be given, of the truth and divinity of any religion. This was evidently the case of *the Jewish* and of *the Christian miracles*; wrought

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in such a manner, as could leave no doubt upon the senses of those, who were the witnesses of them; and for the noblest end, for which the Deity can be conceived to interpose himself; the universal good and salvation of man. For *the Jewish and Christian dispensations* are but different parts of one and the same Scheme; mutually illustrating and confirming each other's authority: And from this view of them, in which they should always be considered, as necessarily connected, and dependent on each other, we see the weakness of that objection, commonly made to *the Mosaic* part, on the account of it's being calculated for the use onely of a peculiar people; whereas in truth, it was the beginning, or first opening of an universal System; which, from the time of *Moses*, was gradually manifested to the world by the successive missions of *the Prophets*, till *that fullness of time, or*

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*coming of the Messiah, when life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel, or the chief good and happiness of man perfectly revealed to him.*

That *Miracles* have ever been thought the most authentic proofs of a divine mission, seems to be declared by the sense of all nations: Since there never was a religion pretending to be divine, which did not support that pretension by an appeal to them: Yet the innumerable forgeries of this sort, which have been imposed upon mankind in all ages, are so far from weakening the credibility of *the Jewish and Christian miracles*, that they strengthen it. For how could we account for a practice so universal, of forging miracles for the support of false religions, if on some occasions they had not actually been wrought, for the confirmation of a true one? Or how is it possible, that so many spurious



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rious copies should pass upon the world, without some genuin original, from which they were drawn ; whose known existence and tried success might give an appearance of probability to the counterfeit? Now of all the miracles of antiquity, there are none, that can pretend to the character of originals, but those of *the Old and New Testament* ; which though the oldest by far, of all others, of which any monuments now remain in the world, have yet maintained their credit to this day, through the perpetual opposition and scrutiny of ages ; whilst all the rival productions of fraud and craft have long ago been successively exploded, and sunk into utter contempt. An event, that cannot reasonably be ascribed to any other cause, but to the natural force and effect of truth, which, though defaced for a time by the wit, or depressed by the power of man, is sure still to triumph in

the end, over all the false mimicry of art, and the vain efforts of human policy.

As to *Mr. Leslie's rules*, of distinguishing the true from false miracles, I have lately perused and considered them; and whatever force they may be supposed to have, I would not advise an Apologist for Christianity, to trust his cause to that single issue. *Mr. Leslie* himself does not do it; but suggests several other arguments for the divinity of our religion, so strong and conclusive, that *even miracles themselves*, as he declares, *would not be sufficient to overrule them*—[a]. His marks however are so far certainly good, that no pretence of miracles can deserve any attention without them; yet it does not necessarily follow, that all the miracles, in which they may be found, ought to be received as true;

[a] See *Leslie*, ib. p. 21.

since

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since as far as I have been able to observe, within the compass of my reading, several might be produced both from *Popery and Paganism*, which seem to possess them all, and are yet unquestionably false.

I have charged the Popish Church in my *Letter*, with many instances of *forged miracles*, to which this Author does not think fit to make any particular reply, but contents himself with a general answer, which must needs be thought curious: for he observes, *that whether the miracles, which I have pitched upon, be true or false, there is nothing at least heathenish in them; and consequently nothing, that shews the conformity, which I pretend to demonstrate, between Popery and Paganism* [b]. Which is in effect to say, that allowing them to be forged, yet they were not forged by *Pagan*, but by

[b] Pref. p. 18.

*Christian*



*Christian Priests*; not for the purposes of *Pagan*, but of *Christian superstition*, so that I cannot with any propriety call them *heathenish*.--But are they not all copied from the patterns of *Paganism*? Are they not applied to the same purposes of fraud and delusion; to keep their people in a slavish subjection to an *Idolatrous worship*; and to acquire wealth and power to the priesthood? This certainly is downright *Paganism*, and the most detestable part of it.

He proceeds however to assert with his usual gravity, “ that God has  
 “ been pleased in every age, to work  
 “ most evident miracles in their  
 “ Church, by the ministry of his  
 “ Saints; in raising the dead to life;  
 “ in curing the blind and the lame;  
 “ in casting out Devils; in healing  
 “ inveterate diseases in a moment,  
 “ attested by the most authentic monuments; which will be a standing  
 “ ing

“ ing evidence to all nations, that  
“ the Church, in which they are  
“ wrought, is not that Idolatrous  
“ Pagan Church, which I pretend  
“ it to be, but the true Spouse of  
“ Christ--[c].” This is the constant  
voice of all *the Romish Apologists* ;  
that *the Catholicism of their Church*  
*is demonstrated by the notoriety of*  
*their miracles* [d]. But since the  
end of all miracles is to convert un-  
believers ; if their miracles be really  
wrought by the power of *Christ*,  
why are they not wrought, like *the*  
*miracles of Christ*, in open day-light ;  
in the midst of unbelieving nations ;  
not for the acquisition of gain or  
power to particular persons, but for  
the benevolent ends of conferring some  
general good, by reforming men’s  
lives, enlightening their understand-  
ings, and promoting truth and peace

[c] Ib. 18, 19. [d] *Nostram Ecclesiam demon-*  
*strabimus esse veram Ecclesiam miraculis.* Bellarm.  
*de Eccles. Milit. l. 4. c. 14.*

and

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and charity amongst men? Why are none of them wrought in *protestant* countries, for whose conversion they are always alledged; but huddled over among their own bigotted votaries; prepared by an habitual credulity, to receive any imposture, that their Priests can invent [e] ?

While *St. Thomas's* Shrine flourished at *Canterbury*, his Saintship was demonstrated by *perpetual miracles* ;

[e] *M. de Marolles* takes occasion to observe, from a fact, which happened in *Paris*, 1644, how easily people, possessed with a superstitious regard to miracles, can persuade themselves, that they see, what in truth has no existence. The story is this; a certain man, out of a mere whim, or with design perhaps to try his pistol, shot it off against a sign in the Street, on which *the Virgin Mary* was painted. The neighbourhood being alarmed, ran out to see what was the matter; and observing *the Virgin* to be pierced through with the bullet, conceived it to be done by some *Heretic*, or *Blasphemer*, in open defiance of their religion; and amazed at so daring an impiety, fancied, that they saw *drops of blood* issue from the wound: of which the whole multitude was so strongly convinced, that there were thousands ready to depose, that they had seen it with their



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*cles* [f] ; in which, as the Historians of those times tell us, he far out-

own eyes: the story became famous, and a Copperplate of it was printed ; till being ridiculed by men of sense, and found to be wholly imaginary, the Copperplate was ordered to be suppressed, and the miracle fell gradually into contempt. But if it had not happened in a country, where the Protestants at that time were very numerous, it might have been stamped perhaps for as genuin a miracle, as many others of the same coinage, which I have taken notice of in the present work.

[f] *John of Salisbury*, who lived at the time, with a great reputation of learning and integrity, and wrote *Becket's life*, whose friend and disciple he was, speaking of the place and manner of his burial, says, " Where  
" to the glory of God many and great miracles are now  
" wrought by him, the people flocking thither in  
" crouds, that they may see in others, and feel also in  
" themselves the power and mercy of him, who is ever  
" wonderfull and glorious in his Saints. For in the  
" place, on which he suffered, and where his body  
" likewise was deposited that night before the great Al-  
" tar ; and also where he was at last buried, the para-  
" lytic are healed ; the blind see ; the deaf hear ; the  
" dumb speak ; the lame walk ; the Devils are cast  
" out ; all who are sick of fevers, or other diseases, are  
" cured ; and what was never heard of in the days of  
" our fathers, the dead are raised. See Vit. S. Thomæ.  
" *Epistolis præfix. Vol. I. 142.*"

*Pope Alexander*, the third of that name, in a Letter to the Church of *Canterbury* upon the subject of  
*Thomas's*

outdid not onely all other Saints, but even *our Saviour* himself. There were two volumes of them preserved in the Church of *Canterbury*; and another book in *France*, in which there was an account of *two hundred and seventy*. *Peter* of *Blois*, a celebrated writer of that age, after drawing a parallel between *Thomas the Apostle*, and *Thomas the Martyr*, says, “ I do not pretend to compare  
 “ a Martyr with an *Apostle*; for an  
 “ *Apostle* is greater; but it is glo-  
 “ rious for us to have a *Martyr*,  
*Thomas's Canonization*, about four years after his death, says, — The whole body of the faithfull must necessarily rejoice to hear of the wonderfull works of the holy and reverend man *Thomas*, your late Archbishop: But you must needs be filled with a more exalted joy, who behold his miracles with your own eyes, and whose Church has the peculiar honor of possessing his most sacred remains. We on our part having considered the glory of his merits, by which his life was made so illustrious, and having received full and certain information of his miracles, not onely from common fame, but from the testimony of our beloved Sons, *Albertus* and *Theoduinus*, Cardinal Priests, and Apostolic Legats, and of a great number of other persons, have solemnly canonized the aforesaid Archbishop, &c. *ib.* p. 170.

“ who

“ who bears the name of an *Apo-*  
“ *stle*, and who equals or surpas-  
“ ses him in his miracles. That  
“ great *Apostle* cannot take it amiss,  
“ that the Holy Spirit should enable  
“ others to work greater wonders,  
“ and in greater number than him :  
“ Since the Lord both of the *Apo-*  
“ *stles and Martyrs* is content to be  
“ outdone by them himself in this  
“ particular : *Ye shall do*, says he,  
“ *not onely these works, that I do ;*  
“ *but greater works than these shall*  
“ *ye do* [ g ].” Which prediction,  
as they declare, was literally full-  
filled by *St. Thomas* : “ Whose blood  
“ being collected with care imme-  
“ diately after his death, not onely  
“ cured all distempers, but raised  
“ even great numbers of the dead  
“ to life : And when the quantity  
“ was found insufficient for the de-  
“ mand, that was made of it, they  
“ were forced to supply it with wa-  
“ ter ; the least drop of which,  
[ g ] Jo. xiv. 12.      “ when



“ when tinged with the Martyr’s  
 “ blood, and administred to the sick,  
 “ or infused into the mouths of the  
 “ dead, had all the same effects;  
 “ so that it was sent abroad into all  
 “ parts of the Christian world, as  
 “ an infallible cure for all kinds of  
 “ diseases [b].”

The fame of these miracles drew Kings and Princes from abroad ; and infinite crouds at home, with dayly offerings to his Shrine : but this harvest was no sooner over, than the power of the Saint fell with the gain of the Priest ; and all his miracles ceased, when the honor of his Altar stood most in need of their support ; so that, the place, where he was formerly worshipped, and where such mighty wonders were once wrought, is now shewn as a

[b] La vie de St. Thomas, p. 442. 4<sup>to</sup>. it. Vita Italicè, p. 430. &c. Pet. Blesens. Epist. 17, & 46. Baron. Ann. 1173. N<sup>o</sup>. 7. Speculum Sanctor. ap. Labbè Biblioth. Nov. &c.

monument onely of the folly and superstition of our Ancestors. But though he works no miracles in *England*, where his bones lie deposited; he works them still in foreign countries, and will continue to do so, as long as there is a Popish Church and a Priesthood, who find their interest in supporting them. For, as *Lactantius* justly observes, “among those, “ who seek power and gain from “ their religion, there will never be “ wanting an inclination to forge “ and to lie for it [i].”

They tell us indeed of *many miracles* of the greatest kind, wrought by their Missionaries in *India*: but they all rest upon no other authority, than the suspected relations of those Missionaries; and are even contradicted by some of their gravest writers. A Royal Professor of *Salamanca*, in one of his public lectures, says; “it does not appear to me, that

[i] *Lactan. de fals. relig. l. 4.*

H

“ the

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“ the Christian faith has been pro-  
“ pounded to the *Indians* in such a  
“ manner, as would reasonably in-  
“ duce them to receive it; for I hear  
“ of *no miracles* performed amongst  
“ them, nor of such examples of the  
“ Christian life, as there ought to be;  
“ but on the contrary, of much scan-  
“ dal and impiety.”--Another learned  
*Jesuit*, who had spent many years  
among *the Indians*, in a treatise on  
the method of converting them, *says*;  
“ What signifies all our preach-  
“ ing? What stress can we lay upon  
“ it? We work *no miracles* [*k*].”  
But among all the boasted miracles  
of these Missionaries, they have never  
so much as pretended to *the gift*  
*of tongues*; which is the first thing  
necessary to the conversion of barba-  
rous nations; and without which all  
their preaching, and even miracles  
themselves would be useless: Yet St.  
*Xaverius* himself, *the Apostle of the*

[*k*] Hospinian. de Origin. Jesuitar. p. 230.

*Indies,*



*Indies*, and one of *their great Saints and workers of miracles*, laments, in several of his Letters, the insuperable difficulties, which he had to struggle with in his Mission, and his incapacity of *doing any good in those countries, for the want of this gift*. And in *Japan* particularly, where according to his account a plentiful harvest was open to him, and great numbers disposed to become Christians ;  
“ God grant, *says he*, that I may soon  
“ learn their language, so as to be able  
“ to expune things divine, and do  
“ some service at last to the Chri-  
“ stian cause. For at present indeed,  
“ I am nothing better than a statue  
“ among them ; and while they are  
“ talking and inquiring many things  
“ about me, am quite dumb through  
“ my ignorance of their tongue : but  
“ I am now acting the boy again in  
“ learning the elements of it [1].”

H 2

Sir

[1] Itaque cum neque illi meam, neque ego illorum linguam intelligerem, &c. Xaverii Epist. l. 5. Sane laboriosum,

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Sir *Thomas Roe*, in a Letter to the *Archbishop of Canterbury* from the Court of *the great Mogul*, relates a fact very applicable to our present subject ; “ That the Jesuit’s  
 “ House and Church in that country happening to be burnt, the  
 “ Crucifix remained untouched,  
 “ which was given out as a miracle.  
 “ The King called for the Jesuit,  
 “ and questioned him about it ; but  
 “ he answered ambiguously : The  
 “ King then asked, whether he did  
 “ not desire to convert him ? And  
 “ being answered in the affirmative,  
 “ replied ; You speak of **your** great  
 “ miracles, and of many done in  
 “ the name of your **Prophet** ; if  
 “ you will cast the Crucifix into a  
 “ fire before me, and it does not

laboriosum est, eorum, quibuscum verferis, funditus ignorare sermonem. ib. 1. 14. Faxit Deus, ut ad divinarum explicationem rerum, *Japonicam* linguam condiscamus quam primum. Tum demum aliquam Christianæ rei navabimus operam. Nam nunc quidem inter eos tanquam mutæ quædam Statuæ versamur, &c. ib. l. 3. 5.

“ burn,

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“ burn, I will become a Christian.  
“ The Jesuit refused the trial, as un-  
“ just; answering, that God was  
“ not tied to the call of man; that  
“ it was a Sin to tempt him; and  
“ that he wrought miracles accord-  
“ ing to his own will; yet he offer-  
“ ed to cast himself into the fire,  
“ as a proof of his own faith, which  
“ the King would not allow. Upon  
“ this, there arose a great dispute,  
“ begun by the Prince; a stiff Ma-  
“ hometan, and hater of Christians;  
“ who urged, that it was reasona-  
“ ble, to try our religion after this  
“ manner; but withal, that if the  
“ Crucifix did burn, then the Jesuit  
“ should be obliged to turn Moor:  
“ He alledged examples also of mi-  
“ racles said to be wrought for less  
“ purposes, than the conversion of  
“ so mighty a King; and spoke  
“ scornfully of Jesus Christ.” Yet  
nothing could move *the Jesuit*, to  
expose the authority of his religion



to the hazard of so dangerous a trial [m].

But as in the case of all beneficial impostures, the security of the managers is apt to push them at last to an extravagance, that betrays the whole cheat, so it has happened in the affair of *the Popish miracles*; which have been carried to such a height of impudence and absurdity, as renders them wholly contemptible; while all their *greater Saints*, and especially *the Founders of the Monastic Orders*, *St. Francis*, *St. Dominic*, &c. are preferred, not only to *the Apostles*, but to *Christ* himself, for the number and importance of their miracles; many of which are authorised by *the Bulls of Popes*, condemning all as *Heretics*, who do not believe them [n]: though they are all pretended to be wrought

[m] See Collection of Travels, published by Churchill, p. 805, 806. [n] Vid. Hospinian, p. 398, 438.

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for no other end, but the propagation of *Enthusiasm* and *Monkery*; and the confirmation of certain doctrines and rites, which are not onely useless, but apparently hurtfull to mankind.

If any such miracles therefore were ever wrought, of which there is the greatest reason to doubt, we must necessarily ascribe them to *the power of the Devil*; endeavouring by such delusions to draw men away from the worship of the true God. This we are warranted to think probable, by the principles of our Religion, and the authority of the primitive Fathers; who exhort us on all such occasions, *to try the miracles*, by their end and tendency, and the nature of that doctrine, which is proposed to be established by them: for though miracles carry the strongest presumption, as I have said, of the divinity of a doctrine in whose

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favor they are alledged, yet they are intended chiefly to rouse the attention of the world to the preacher or prophet, who pretends to perform them, that his commission may be openly examined, whether it be of God or not.

The *Jesuit Maldonatus*, in his *Comment on Matt. vii. 22.* observes, “ That *St. Chrysoſtom*, *Jerom*, *Euthemius*, *Theophylact*, prove by “ ſeveral inſtances, that real miracles had been performed by thoſe, “ who were not Catholic Chriſtians.” *St. Chryſoſtom* declares, “ that miracles are proper onely, to excite “ ſluggiſh and vulgar minds ; that “ men of ſenſe have no occaſion for “ them ; and that they frequently “ carry ſome untoward ſuſpicion along with them [o].” “ We are

[o] Vid. *Chryſoſt. Oper. Edit. Benediſt. T. 5. 271. a. 376. b. T. 8. 296. a. 205, 455.*

“ to



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“ to take notice, *says St. Jerom,*  
“ that some are said to have the  
“ gifts of the Spirit, who do not  
“ hold the truth of the Gospel,  
“ which may serve to silence those  
“ Heretics, who, if they can but  
“ work a miracle, fancy presently,  
“ that they have demonstrated the  
“ truth of their faith [*p*].” “ If  
“ miracles, *says St. Austin,* are  
“ wrought in the Catholic Church,  
“ it's Catholicism is not thereby ma-  
“ nifested, because miracles are  
“ wrought in it, but the miracles  
“ themselves are to be received, be-  
“ cause they are wrought in a  
“ Church, that is Catholic.” And  
*Theodore* tells us, “ that we are  
“ commanded, not to give credit to  
“ them, when the performers of  
“ them teach things contrary to  
“ true piety [*q*].”

[*p*] Vid. Hieron. in Galat. 3. Oper. T. 4. p. 251.  
Edit. Bened. [*q*] Vid Hospin. de doctrina Jesuit.  
p. 388.

If agreeably then to the injunctions of the Apostles, and Primitive Fathers, we sit down to examine the pretended miracles of *Rome*, we shall find them always the most numerous, and the most confidently attested, in proportion to the absurdity of the doctrine or practice, in whose favor they are alledged; as in the case of *Transubstantiation, Purgatory, the worship of Images, Reliques, Crucifixes, Indulgences, and all the tricks of Monkery*; as if miracles were of no other use, but to subvert the reason and senses of mankind, and confound all the distinctions between right and wrong: but if there be any rule of judging of their reality, or any power in man to discern truth from falsehood, we must necessarily conclude, from *the nature and end of the Popish miracles*, that, whatever testimonies may be brought to support them, they were all without exception,

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exception, either wrought by wicked spirits, or forged by wicked men.

I have now run through every thing, that seemed worthy of any notice in my adversary's Preface; where I have the satisfaction to observe, that though he accuses me so freely of *slander and falsehood*, yet he has not denied so much as one of the numerous facts, on which I ground my charge of their *paganism*. It was upon the strength of these facts, that I first offered my Letter to the judgement of the public, and the favorable reception, which it has met with, shews, that it is not thought trifling, and foreign to the purpose, as he affirms it to be; but pertinent and decisive of the question, which it professes to illustrate. It is a folly therefore to attack the credit of it, till he comes prepared to overthrow the facts, on which it is built; for while these are allowed to be firm,

3 the



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the inference is undeniable, “ that  
“ Popery has borrowed it’s principal  
“ ceremonies and doctrines from the  
“ rituals of Paganism.”

The truth of this charge is so evident to all, who know any thing of Antiquity, that though a Missionary, as we may imagine, would be glad to conceal it even from Papists, and much more from Protestants, whom he is endeavouring to convert, yet all their own writers, who have any candor and learning, make no scruple to acknowledge it. *M. de Marolles* informs us, how he once *surprized a great Archbishop of France*, by a frank declaration of it: which he afterwards demonstrated to him at large, by a particular deduction of it through many of the same instances, on which I have insisted in my Letter [r]. The learned *Du Choul* also

[r] Un jour que j'étois auprès de Monf. de la Feuillade, Archevesque d'Embrun—l'occasion s'étant offerte  
de

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also thus concludes his book *on the Religion of the Old Romans*: “ If  
“ we consider the case attentively,  
“ we shall find very many institu-  
“ tions of our religion, to have been  
“ borrowed from the ceremonies of  
“ the *Ægyptians* and the *Gentiles*--  
“ all which our Priests now make  
“ use of in our mysteries, by refer-  
“ ring to the onely true God, *Jesus*  
“ *Christ*, what the ignorance, false  
“ religion, and senseless superstition  
“ of the *Pagans* had applied to their  
“ Gods, and to mortal men after  
“ their consecration [s].”

Our *Catholic* however concludes his work in a very different stile; and in a kind of triumph for an imagined victory, undertakes by my

de luy dire, que beaucoup de ceremonies du Paganisme avoient etè sanctifiées par la pietè de nostre Religion, ce qui ne s'estoit point fait sans mystere; je m'apperceus, qu'il s'en etonna un peu: Sur quoy je luy demandai audience, &c. *Memoires de Marolles*, par. 2. p. 209.

[s] De religione Veter. Romanor. ad fin.

own

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own way of reasoning, to demonstrate *the same conformity between the English and Romish Church*, which I have attempted to shew between *Popery and Paganism*; from the number of observances, which our Church still retains from the old Religion of Rome: in consequence of which, he says, “if my argument be right, “our Protestantism at last will be “found to be nothing better than “heathenish Idolatry.” But if we recollect the definition, which I have given above, of *Popery*, the question will be reduced to a short issue; by considering onely, whether any of those particulars, which prove their religion to be *paganish*, are retained still in ours; whether we have any *incense, holy water, or lamps* in our Churches; *any votive offerings* hanging round our pillars; *any miraculous images*; *any adoration of Saints*; *any altars in the streets, the way-sides, and tops of hills*; *any processions*; *miracles,*



*racles, or monkery amongst us: if after all our reformation, we retain any of these, we are so far undoubtedly as criminal as they; but if none of them can be found upon us, we are clear at least from all that pagan idolatry, which glares out so manifestly from every part of the Popish worship.*

All that he can object to us on this head, amounts to no more than this;  
“ That there are several observances  
“ retained in our sacred Offices,  
“ which we use in common with  
“ the Church of *Rome* :” we own it;  
but take them all to be such, as we may retain with innocence. We profess to retain all, that is truly Christian; all, that is enjoined by the Gospel, or by just inference deducible from it. But if besides all this, they can discover any thing amongst us, that they can claim as their own; or that may properly be called *Popish* ;

*pish*; I should willingly resign it to them; and consent to any expedient, that may remove us farther still from *Popery*, and unite us more closely with all sober Protestants. But whether any thing of this sort be remaining in our present establishment; or how far any of the instances, which he declares to have been borrowed from *Rome*, may want a review or farther reformation, as it is not the part of a private man to determine, so I shall refer it, as I ought, to the Judgement of my Superiors. But it is high time to put an end to the reader's trouble, to which I shall beg leave onely to add the following *anonymous Letter*, which has some relation to my present Subject, and was sent to me by the post, while I was employed on the life of *Cicero*.

“ *S I R,*

“ You are desired by one of your  
“ Subscribers, instead of amusing  
“ your-

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“ yourself with writing *the life of*  
“ *Cicero*, to answer *the Catholic*  
“ *Christian*, written (as the Author  
“ declares) in answer to, and in or-  
“ der to shew your false reasonings  
“ in your comparison of *the Popish*  
“ *and Pagan ceremonies of Religion*  
“ —*This Catholic Christian* abuses  
“ the Protestant Religion, taxes it’s  
“ Divines with false translations and  
“ quotations out of Scripture, which  
“ he pretends, they do not under-  
“ stand or misapply, to make out  
“ their own *Heretical* doctrines.—  
“ Such scandalous reproaches brought  
“ upon yourself, and also upon the  
“ Protestant Religion by your writ-  
“ ings, make it incumbent on you,  
“ to wipe off these stains, which by  
“ your means are contracted, before  
“ you enter upon any other subject,

“ *I am Yours, &c.*”



“ P. S. It had been honefter and  
 “ fairer, to have answered the book,  
 “ than to have complained *to the*  
 “ *Bishop of London*, againſt the  
 “ Printer, and got him put into  
 “ priſon.”

I do not know, how far my unknown Correspondent will think himſelf obliged to me, for performing the taſk, that he preſcribes, of defending my *Letter from Rome*, from the cavils of *the Catholic Chriſtian*: I am in hopes however, that my pains may be of ſome uſe, as well to admoniſh all ſerious *Papiſts*, of the fraud and foppery of their own worſhip, as to deter Proteſtants from running over to a Church, ſo notoriously corrupt and *Heatheniſh*.---As to the charge intimated in the poſtſcript, of *procuring the imprisonment of the Printer, inſtead of answering the Author*, it would have left indeed a juſt reproach upon me,  
 if

if there had been any truth in it; but if any man has been imprisoned, or put to any trouble, on the account of that book, I declare, that I am an utter stranger to it; that I have not the honor to be known *to the Bishop of London*; and that no personal provocation whatsoever could induce me, to desire the imprisonment of any man for the sake of his religion. My aversion to *Popery* is grounded, not onely on *it's paganism and idolatry*, but on it's being calculated for the support of despotic power, and inconsistent with the genius of a free government. This I take to be it's real character; which I do not however extend to the particular professors of it; many of whom I know to be men of great probity, politeness, and humanity; who through the prejudice of education, do not either see the consequences, of what they are trained to profess; or through a mistaken point

of honor, think it a duty to adhere to the religion of their Ancestors. With these I can live, not onely in charity, but in friendship; without the least inclination to offend them any farther, than by obstructing all endeavours to introduce a religion amongst us, which would necessarily be ruinous to the liberty of our country. Thus much I thought myself obliged to say upon the occasion of the foregoing Letter; that while *the Papists* look upon me as an enemy, they may consider me at least as a fair one; an enemy *to the idolatrous and slavish principles of their Church*; but free from all prejudice, or enmity to their persons.



TO THE  
R E A D E R.

**T**HE following reflexions were the subject of several Letters written by me from Rome, to my friends in England; and as the argument of them was much upon my thoughts, and always in my view, during my stay in Italy, so there hardly passed a day, that did not afford me fresh matter and proof for the confirmation of it, till my collections grew up to the size in which they now appear. Upon a review of them at my return, I found it necessary, for the sake of method and connection, to dispose them into one continued argument, and to collect into one view, under the form of a single Letter, what had been more slightly and separately touched in several.

*Many writers, I know, have treated the same subject before me; some of which I have never seen; but those, whom I have looked into, handle it in a manner so different from what I have pursued, that I am under no apprehension of being thought a Plagiary, or to have undertaken a province already occupied. My Observations are grounded on Facts, of which I have been an eye witness myself, and which others perhaps had not the opportunity of examining personally, or considering so particularly as I have done; and in my present representation of them, I have not claimed the allowed privilege of a Traveller, to be believed on my own word, but for each article charged on the Church of Rome, have generally produced such vouchers, as they themselves will allow to be authentic.*

*Much leisure, with an infirm state of health, was the cause of my journey*

*ney to Italy ; and on such an occasion, I thought it my duty, to use the opportunity given me by Providence, towards detecting and exposing, as far as I was able, the true spring and source of those impostures, which, under the name of Religion, have been forged from time to time for no other purpose, than to oppress the liberty, and engross the property of mankind.*

*But whatever be my opinion of the general scheme of that religion, yet, out of justice to the particular professors of it, I think myself obliged to declare, that I found much candor, humanity, and politeness in all those, whom I had the honor to converse with; and though my character and profession were well known at Rome, yet I received particular civilities from persons of the first distinction both in the Church, and the Court.*





LETTER from *ROME*.

S I R,

I AM sensible, that by this time you cannot but be desirous to have some account of the entertainment, that I have met with in *Rome*; for as you have often heard me declare a very high opinion of the pleasure, which a curious man might reasonably expect to find in it, so you will be impatient to hear, how far my expectation has been answered, and my curiosity satisfied. You have observed, without doubt, from my former letters, that the pleasure of my travels seemed to grow upon me in proportion to the progress, which I made on my journey, and to my approach towards *Rome*; and that every place, which I had seen the last, still pleased me the most. This was certainly true in my road through *Lyons, Turin, Genua, Florence*; but is much more remarkably so with regard

to *Rome* ; which, of all the places that I have yet seen, or ever shall see, is by far the most delightful : since all those very things, which had recommended any other place to me, and which I had been admiring before, single and dispersed, in the several cities through which I passed, may be seen in *Rome*, as it were in one view, and not only in greater plenty, but in greater perfection.

I have often been thinking, that this voyage to *Italy* might properly enough be compared to the common stages and journey of life. At our setting out through *France*, the pleasures that we find, like those of our youth, are of the gay fluttering kind, which grow by degrees, as we advance towards *Italy*, more solid, manly, and rational, but attain not their full perfection till we reach *Rome* ; from which point we no sooner turn homewards, than they begin again gradually to decline, and though sustained for a while in some degree of vigor, through the other stages and cities of *Italy*, yet dwindle at last into weariness and fatigue, and a desire to be at home ; where the traveller finishes his course, as the old man does



does his days, with the usual privilege of being tiresome to his friends, by a perpetual repetition of past adventures.

But to return to my story. *Rome* is certainly of all cities in the world the most entertaining to strangers : for whether we consider it in it's antient, or present ; it's civil, or ecclesiastical state ; whether we admire the great perfection of arts in the noble remains of *Old Rome* ; or the revival of the same arts in the beautiful ornaments of *modern Rome* ; every one, of what genius or taste soever, will be sure to find something or other, that will deserve his attention, and engage his curiosity : and even those, who have no particular taste or regard at all for things curious, but travel merely for the sake of fashion, and to waste time, will still spend that time with more satisfaction at *Rome*, than any where else ; from that easy manner, in which they find themselves accommodated with all the conveniences of life ; that general civility and respect to strangers ; that quiet and security, which every man of prudence is sure to find in it. But one thing is certainly peculiar to this city ; that though travellers  
have

have generally been so copious in their descriptions of it, and there are published in all parts of *Europe* such voluminous collections of it's curiosities, yet it is a subject, never to be exhausted: since in the infinite variety of entertainment, which it affords, every judicious observer will necessarily find something or other, that has either escaped the searches of others, or that will at least afford matter for more particular and curious remarks, than a common traveller is capable of making, or a general collector has time to reflect on. The learned *Montfaucon*, speaking of the *Villa of Prince Borghese*, says; though it's *Antique monuments and rarities have been a hundred times described in print, that many more of them still have been overlooked and omitted, than are yet published* [a]. And if this be true of one single collection, what an idea must we have of the immense treasure of the same kind, which the whole city is able to furnish?

[a] Adeo ut cum sexcentis in descriptionibus, quæ de villa Burghesiana in publicum emissæ sunt, monumenta bene multa enumerata recensitaque sint, multo plura prætermissa sint inobservata, *Diar. Ital.* c. 16.

As for my own journey to this place, it was not, I own, any motive of devotion, which draws so many others hither, that occasioned it. My zeal was not bent on visiting the *holy thresholds of the Apostles*, or *kissing the feet of their successor*. I knew, that their *ecclesiastical antiquities* were mostly fabulous and legendary; supported by fictions and impostures, too gross to employ the attention of a man of sense. For should we allow, that St. *Peter* had been at *Rome*, (of which many learned men however have doubted [b],) yet they had not, I knew, any *authentic monuments* remaining of him; any *visible footsteps* subsisting, to demonstrate his residence among them: and should we ask them for any evidence of this kind, they would refer us to the *impression of his face on the wall of the dungeon, in which he was confined*: or to a *fountain in the bottom of it, raised miraculously by him out of the rock, in order*

[b] De Petri Romam adventu, sedē xxv. annorum, supremo capitis supplicio ibidem, nemo, qui paullo humanior fuerit, credere posset. Scalig. in Joh. 18. 31. it. Vid. Frid. Spanh. Miscellan. Sacræ Antiq. 1. 3. Dissertat. 3.



*to baptize his fellow-prisoners [c] : or to the mark of our Saviour's feet in a stone, on which he appeared to him, and stopped him, as he was flying out of the city from a persecution then raging : In memory of which, there was a Church built on the spot, called St. Mary delle Piante, or of the marks of the feet ; which falling into decay, was supplied by a chapel, at the expence of our Cardinal Pool [d]. But the stone itself, more valuable, as their writers say [e], than any of the precious ones ; being a perpetual monument and proof of the Christian Religion ; is preserved with all due reverence in St. Sebastian's Church ; where I purchased a print of it, with several others of the same kind. Or they would*

[c] Due gloriose memorie lasciarono di se in questa prigione i detti fanti Apostoli, &c. Vid. Rom. Modern. Giorn. 5. c. 13. Rione di Campitelli. It. Vid. Aringhi Rom. subterr. l. 2. c. 1. It. Montfauc. Diar. Ital. c. 13. p. 174.

Unda deest : Petri virga Tarpeia Rupes  
Percussa, e Petris larga fluentia dedit, &c.

[d] Rom. Modern. Giorn. 2. Rione di Ripa 21.

[e] Vid. Aring. ibid. l. 3. c. 21. Lapis vero ille dignissimus & omni pretioso lapidi anteferendus, in D. Sebastiani ecclesiam translatus, ibidem, quo par est religionis cultu, in perenne Religionis Christianæ monumentum aservatur. Ibid.

appeal

appeal perhaps to the evidence of some *miracle* wrought at his execution ; as they do in the case of *St. Paul* ; in a *Church* called, *At the three Fountains* ; the place where he was beheaded : on which occasion, it seems, “ Instead of blood there  
“ issued only milk from his veins ; and his  
“ head, when separated from the body,  
“ having made three jumps upon the  
“ ground, raised at each place a spring of  
“ living water, which retains still, as they  
“ would persuade us, the plain taste of  
“ milk :” of all which facts we have an account in *Baronius*, *Mabillon*, and all their *gravest authors* [f] ; and may see printed figures of them in the description of *modern Rome* [g].

It was no part of my design, to spend my time abroad, in attending to the ridiculous fictions of this kind : the chief pleasure, which I proposed to myself, was, to

[f] Cum sacrum caput obtruncaretur, non tam fluente sanguinis, quam candidissimi lactis rivuli, &c.

It. in ipso autem Martyrii loco tres adhuc pexigui jugiter fontes, &c. horum primus cæteris dulciôr saporem lactis præ se fert, &c. Aring. l. 3. c. 2. It. vid. Baronii Annal. A. D. 69. It. Mabill. Iter. Ital. p. 142.

[g] Vid. Rom. Modern. Gior. 2. c. 17. Rione di Ripa:

visit

visit the genuin remains, and *venerable reliques of Pagan Rome*; the *authentic monuments of antiquity*, that demonstrate the certainty of those histories, which are the entertainment, as well as the instruction of our younger years; and which, by the early prejudice of being the first knowledge that we acquire, as well as the delight, which they give, in describing the lives and manners of the greatest men, who ever lived, gain sometimes so much upon our riper age, as to exclude too often other more useful and necessary studies. I could not help flattering myself with the joy, that I should have, in viewing the *very place and scene* of those important events, the knowledge and explication of which have ever since been the chief employment of the learned and polite world; in *treading that ground*, where at every step we stumble on the ruins of *some fabric* described by the *Antients*; and cannot help setting a foot on the *memorial* of some *celebrated action*, in which the *great heroes of antiquity* had been personally engaged. I amused myself with the thoughts of taking a turn in those very walks, where *Cicero* and his friends had held *their philosophical disputations*, or of stand-  
ing



ing on that very spot, where he had delivered some of his *famous Orations*.

Such fancies as these, with which I often entertained myself on my road to *Rome*, are not, I dare say, peculiar to myself, but common to all men of reading and education ; whose dreams upon a *voyage to Italy*, like the descriptions of the *Elysian fields*, represent nothing to their fancies, but the pleasure of finding out and conversing with *those ancient Sages and Heroes*, whose characters they have most admired. Nor indeed is this imagination much disappointed in the event ; for, as *Cicero* observes, “ [b] Whether it be from  
 “ nature, or some weakness in us, it is cer-  
 “ tain, that we are much more affected with  
 “ the sight of those places, where great  
 “ and famous men have spent most part of  
 “ their lives, than either to hear of their  
 “ actions, or read their works :” and he was not, as he tells us, “ so much pleased

[b] Natura ne nobis hoc, inquit, datum dicam, an errore quodam, ut cum ea loca videamus, in quibus Memoria dignos Viros acceperimus multos esse versatos, magis moveamur, quam si quando eorum ipsorum aut facta audiamus, aut scriptum aliquod legamus. Cic. de Fin. 5.

K

“ with

“ with *Athens* itself, for it’s stately build-  
 “ ings or exquisite pieces of art, as in re-  
 “ collecting the great men, whom it had  
 “ bred ; in carefully visiting their sepul-  
 “ chers ; and finding out the place where  
 “ each had lived, or walked, or held his  
 “ disputations [i].” This is what every  
 man of curiosity will, in the like circum-  
 stances, find true in himself ; and for my  
 own part, as oft as I have been rambling  
 about in the very *rostra* of *old Rome*, or in  
 that *temple of concord*, where *Tully* assem-  
 bled the Senate in *Catiline’s* conspiracy [k] ;  
 I could not help fancying myself much  
 more sensible of the force of his eloquence ;  
 whilst the impresson of the place served to  
 warm my imagination to a degree almost  
 equal to that of his *old audience*.

As therefore my general studies had fur-  
 nished me with a competent knowledge of  
*Roman History*, as well as an inclination, to

[i] Me quidem ipsæ illæ nostræ Athenæ non tam operi-  
 bus magnificis exquisitisque antiquorum Artibus delectant,  
 quam recordatione summorum Virorum, ubi quisque habi-  
 tare, ubi sedere, ubi disputare sit solitus ; studiisque eorum  
 etiam Sepulchra contemplor. De Legib. 2. 2.

[k] Vid. Orat. in Catilin. 3, 4. It. Phil. 2. 4.

search

search more particularly into some branches of it's antiquities, so I had resolved to employ myself chiefly in inquiries of this sort ; and to lose as little time as possible, in taking notice of the fopperies and ridiculous ceremonies of the *present Religion* of the place. But I soon found myself mistaken ; for the whole form and outward dress of their worship seemed so grossly *idolatrous and extravagant*, beyond what I had imagined, and made so strong an impression on me, that I could not help considering it with a particular regard ; especially when the very reason, which I thought would have hindered me from taking any notice of it at all, was the chief cause, that engaged me to pay so much attention to it : for nothing, I found, concurred so much with my original intention of conversing with the ancients ; or so much helped my imagination, to fancy myself wandering about in *old Heathen Rome*, as to observe and attend to their *religious worship* ; all whose ceremonies appeared plainly to have been copied from the *rituals of primitive Paganism* ; as if handed down by an uninterrupted succession from the *priests of old*, to the *priests of new Rome* ; whilst each of



them readily explained and called to my mind some passage of a *classic author*, where the *same ceremony* was described, as transacted in the *same form and manner*, and in the *same place*, where I now saw it executed before my eyes : so that as oft as I was present at any religious exercise in *their Churches*, it was more natural, to fancy myself looking on at some *solemn act of idolatry in old Rome*, than assisting at a worship, instituted on the principles, and formed upon the plan of Christianity.

Many of our Divines have, I know, with much learning and solid reasoning charged, and effectually proved the *crime of idolatry on the Church of Rome* : but these controversies (in which there is still something plausible to be said on the other side, and where the charge is constantly denied, and with much subtilty evaded) are not capable of giving that conviction, which I immediately received from my senses ; the surest witnesses of fact in all cases ; and which no man can fail to be furnished with, who sees *Popery*, as it is exercised in *Italy*, in the full pomp and display of its pageantry ; and practising all its arts and powers with-

without caution or reserve. This *similitude of the Popish and Pagan Religion*, seemed so evident and clear, and struck my imagination so forcibly, that I soon resolved to give myself the trouble of searching to the bottom; and to explaine and demonstrate the certainty of it, by comparing together the principal and most obvious parts of each worship: which, as it was my first employment after I came to *Rome*, shall be the subject of my first Letter. Reserving therefore to my next, the account, that I design to give you of the *antiquities* and other *curiosities* of the place, I shall find matter enough for this time, to tire both you and myself, in shewing the *source and origin* of the *Popish Ceremonies*, and the exact *conformity* of them with those of their *Pagan Ancestors*.

The very first thing, that a stranger must necessarily take notice of, as soon as he enters their *Churches*, is the use of *incense* or *perfumes* in their *religious offices*: the first step, which he takes within the door, will be sure to make him sensible of it, by the offence, that he will immediately receive from the smell, as well as smoak of this

*incense* ; with which the whole Church continues filled for some time after every solemn service. A custom, received directly from *Paganism* ; and which presently called to my mind the old descriptions of the *Heathen temples and altars*, which are seldom or never mentioned by the *antients* without the epithet of *perfumed* or *incensed* [1].

In some of their *principal Churches*, where you have before you, in one view, a *great number of altars*, and all of them smoaking at once with *streams of incense*, how natural is it to imagine oneself transported into the *temple of some Heathen deity*, or that of the *Paphian Venus* described by *Virgil*?

——— *Ubi templum illi, centumque Sabæo  
Thure calent Aræ, sertisque recentibus  
balant.* Æn. I. 420.

[1] ——— Τέμεν & Βώμος & Θύηεις. Hom. Il. ψ. 148.

——— *Thuricremis cum dona imponeret Aris.* Virg. Æn. 4. v. 453.

Theocrit. id. 15. 123. Hom. Il. θ. 48. Virg. 11. Æn. 4. v. 481.

*Sæpe Jovem vidi, cum jam sua mittere vellet,  
Fulmina, thure dato sustinuisse manum.* Ovid.

Her



Her hundred altars there with garlands  
crown'd,  
And richest incense smoaking, breath around  
Sweet odors, &c.

Under the *Pagan Emperors*, the use of *incense* for any purpose of religion was thought so contrary to the obligations of *Christianity*, that in their persecutions, the very method of *trying and convicting a Christian*, was by requiring him only, to throw the least grain of it into the censer, or on the altar [m].

Under the *Christian Emperors*, on the other hand, it was looked upon as a *rite* so peculiarly *heathenish*, that [n] the very  
places

[m] Maximus dixit: Ture tantum Deos, Nicander, honorato. Nicander dixit: Quomodo potest homo Christianus lapides & ligna colere, Deo relicto immortali? &c. Vid. Act. Martyr. Nicandri, &c. apud Mabill. Iter. Ital. T. 1, Par. 2. p. 247.

Adeo ut Christianos verè sacrificare crederent, ubi summis Digitis paululum thuris iniecissent Acerram, &c. Vide Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 9.

Non est in eo tantum Servitus Idoli, siquis duobus digittulis Thura in bustum aræ jaciat, Hieron. Oper. T. 4. Epist. ad Heliod. p. 8.

[n] Namque omnia loca, quæ Thuris constiterit vapore fumasse, si tamen ea fuisse in jure thurificantium probabitur,

*places or houses*, where it could be proved to have been done, were by a *law of Theodosius confiscated to the government*.

In the *old bass-reliefs*, or *pieces of sculpture*, where any *Heathen sacrifice* is represented, we never fail to observe a *boy in sacred habit*, which was always white, attending on the *priest*, with a little *chest* or *box* in his hands, in which this *incense* was kept for the *use of the altar* [o]. And in the same manner still in the *Church of Rome*, there is always a *boy in surplice*, waiting on the *priest* at the *altar* with the sacred utensils, and among the rest, the *Thuribulum* or *vessel of incense*, which the *priest*, with many ridiculous motions and crossings, waves several times, as it is smoking, around, and over the altar in different parts of the service.

The next thing, that will of course strike one's imagination, is their use of

Fisco nostro adfocianda censemus, &c. Jac. Gothof. de Stat. Paganor. sub Christian. Imper. leg. 12. p. 15.

[o] Vid. Montfauc. Antiq. Tom. 2. Plate 23, 24, 25.

*Da mihi Thura, Puer, Pinguis facientia Flammæ.*

Ovid. Trist. 5. 5.  
holy

*holy water*: for nobody ever goes in or out of a *church*, but is either *sprinkled by the priest*, who attends for that purpose on solemn days, or else serves himself with it from a *vessel*, usually of marble, placed just at the door, not unlike to one of our *baptismal fonts*. Now *this ceremony* is so notoriously and directly transmitted to them from *Paganism*, that their *own writers* make not the least scruple to own it. The *Jesuit la Cerda*, in his notes on a passage of *Virgil*, where this practice is mentioned, says, *Hence was derived the custom of holy Church, to provide purifying or holy water at the entrance of their Churches* [p]. *Aquaminarium* or *Amula*, says the learned *Montfaucon*, was a *vase of holy water*, placed by the *Heathens* at the entrance of their *Temples*, to *sprinkle themselves with* [q]. The same vessel was by the *Greeks* called *Περιρραντήριον*; two of which, the one of *gold*, the other of *silver*, were given by *Cræsus* to the *Temple of Apollo at Del-*

[p] *Spargens rore levi*, &c. *Virg. Æn.* 6. 230. vid. *Not.*

[q] Vid. *Montfauc. Antiquit. T.* 2. Pt. 1. l. 3. c. 6.

καθαγαῖς δὲ θεόσοις

Ἄφουδρανάμενοι γείχετε ναὸς.

*Eurip. Jone.* v. 96.



phi [r] : and the custom of *sprinkling* themselves was so necessary a part of all their religious offices, that the method of excommunication seems to have been by prohibiting to offenders the approach and use of the *holy-water pot* [s]. The very composition of this *holy-water* was the same also among the *Heathens*, as it is now among the *Papists*, being nothing more than a *mixture of salt with common water* [t]: and the form of the *sprinkling-brush*, called by the ancients *asperforium* or *aspergillum* (which is much the same with what the *priests* now make use of) may be seen in *bas-reliefs*, or *ancient coins*, wherever the *insignia*, or *emblems of the Pagan priesthood* are described, of which it is generally one [u].

[r] Herodot. l. 1. 51. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1.

[s] Vid. Æschin. Orat. contra Ctesiphon. 58.

[t] Porro singulis diebus Dominicis sacerdos missæ sacrum factururus, aquam sale adpersam benedicendo revocare debet eaque populum adpersere. Durant. de Rit. l. 1. c. 21.

ἐπεὶ αὖ δ' ἄλεσσι μεμιγμένον, ὡς νενόμισται,  
Θαλλῶ ἐπιῤῥαίνειν ἐγέμμενον ἀελαθεῖ ὕδρι. Theocrit. xδ. 95.

[u] Vid. Montfauc. Antiq. T. 2. P. 1. l. 3. c. 6. *It may be seen on a silver coin of Julius Cæsar, as well as many other Emperors.* Ant. Agostini discorso sopra le Medaglie.

*Platina,*

*Platina*, in his lives of *the Popes*, and other authors, ascribe the institution of this *holy-water* to *Pope Alexander the first*; who is said to have lived about the year of Christ 113: but it could not be introduced so early, since for some ages after, we find the *primitive fathers* speaking of it, as a custom purely *heathenish*, and condemning it as *impious* and *detestable*. *Justin Martyr* says, “ That it was invented by *dæmons*, “ in imitation of the true baptism signified “ by the *Prophets*, that their votaries might “ also have their pretended purifications by “ water [x]:” and the Emperor *Julian*, out of spite to the *Christians*, used to order the victuals in the markets to be *sprinkled with holy-water*, on purpose either to starve, or force them to eat, what by their own principles they esteemed polluted [y].

Thus we see what contrary notions the *Primitive* and *Romish Church* have of this

[x] Καὶ τὸ λεγόμενον δὴ τῷτο ἀνέσταντες οἱ Δαίμονες διὰ τῷ προ-  
φῆτε κεκηρυγμένον, ἐνέγκησαν καὶ, ἐκρίνουν ἑαυτοὺς τὰς εἰς τὰ ἱερὰ  
αὐτῶν ἐπιβάλλοντας. Just. Mart. Apol. 1. p. 91. Edit. Thirlb.

[y] Vid. Hospinian. de Orig. Templor. l. 2. c. 25.

cere-

*ceremony*: the first condemns it as *superstitious, abominable, and irreconcilable with Christianity*: the latter adopts it as highly *edifying and applicable* to the improvement of *christian piety*: the one looks upon it as the *contrivance of the Devil to delude mankind*; the other as the *security of mankind* against the *delusions of the devil*. But what is still more ridiculous than even the *ceremony itself*, is to see their learned writers gravely reckoning up the several virtues and benefits, derived from the use of it, both to the soul and the body [z]; and to crown all, producing a long *roll of miracles*, to attest the certainty of each virtue, which they ascribe to it [a]. Why may we not then justly apply to the *present people of Rome*, what was said by the *Poet* of its *old inhabitants*, for the use of *this very ceremony*?

*Ab nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina  
cædis*

*Flumineâ tolli possè putetis aquâ!*

Ovid. Fast. 2. 45.

[z] Durant. de Ritib. I. 1. c. 21. it. Hospin. ibid.

[a] Hujus aquæ benedictæ virtus variis miraculis illustratur, &c. Durant. ibid.

Ah,



Ah, easy Fools, to think that a whole  
Flood  
Of Water e'er can purge the Stain of  
Blood!

I do not at present recollect whether the  
*antients* went so far, as to apply the use of  
this *holy-water* to the purifying or blessing  
*their horses, asses, and other cattle*; or  
whether this be an improvement of *modern*  
*Rome*, which has dedicated a *yearly festival*  
peculiarly to this service, called in their  
vulgar language, the *benediction of horses*;  
which is always celebrated with much so-  
lemnity in the month of *January*; when  
all the inhabitants of the city and neigh-  
bourhood send up *their horses, asses, &c.*  
to the *convent* of St. *Antony*, near St. *Mary*  
*the Great*, where a *priest in surplice* at the  
Church-door *sprinkles* with his brush all  
the *animals* singly, as they are presented to  
him, and receives from each owner a gra-  
tuity proportionable to his zeal and abili-  
ty [b]. Amongst the rest, I had my own

[b] Ma ogni forte d'animali a questo fanto si raccom-  
manda, e però nel giorno della sua festa sono portate molte  
offerte a questa sua chiesa, in gratitudine delle gratie, che  
diversi hanno ottenute da lui sopra de' loro bestiami. Rom.  
modern. Giorn. 6. c. 46. Rione de' Monti.

horses blest at the expence of about *eighteen pence* of our money ; as well to satisfy my own curiosity, as to humor the coachman ; who was persuaded, as the common people generally are, that some mischance would befall them within the year, if they wanted the benefit of this *Benediction*. *Mabillon*, in giving an account of this function, of which he happened also to be an eye-witness, makes no other reflection upon it, than that it was *new* and *unusual* to him [c].

I have met indeed with some hints of a practice, not foreign to this, among the ancients ; of *sprinkling their horses with water in the Circensian Games* [d] : but whether this was done out of a *superstitious view*, of inspiring any virtue, or purifying them for those races, which were esteemed sacred ; or merely to refresh them under the violence of such an exercise, is

[c] In Festo Sancti Antonii prope S. Mariam Majorem, ritus nobis insolitus visus est, ut quicquid equorum est in urbe ducantur eum suis phaleris ad portam ecclesiæ, ubi aqua lustrali ab uno e patribus omnes & singuli asperguntur, dato annuo censu. Mabill. It. Ital. p. 136.

[d] Vid. Rubenii Elect. 2. 18.

not easy to determine. But allowing the *Romish Priests* to have taken the hint from some *old custom of Paganism*; yet this however must be granted them, that they alone were capable of cultivating so coarse and barren a piece of superstition, into a revenue sufficient for the maintenance of *forty or fifty idle Monks*.

No sooner is a man advanced a little forward into their *Churches*, and begins to look about him, but he will find his eyes and attention attracted by a number of *lamps and wax candles*, which are constantly burning before the *Skrines and Images of their Saints*. In all the great *Churches of Italy*, says *Mabillon* [e], they hang up lamps at every altar : a sight, which will not only surprize a stranger by the novelty of it, but will furnish him with another proof and example of the conformity of the *Romish* with the *Pagan worship* ; by recalling to his memory many passages of the *Heathen Writers*, where their perpetual lamps and candles are

[e] Ad singulas ecclesiæ aras (qui ritus in omnibus Italiæ Basilicis observatur) singulæ appensæ sunt Lampades. *Mabil. It. Ital. p. 25.*

described,



described, as continually burning before the  
*altars and statues of their Deities* [ *f* ].

*Herodotus* tells us of the *Ægyptians*, (who first introduced the use of *lights* or *lamps* into their temples) [ *g* ] that they had a *famous yearly festival*, called from the principal ceremony of it, the *lighting up of candles* [ *h* ] : but there's scarce a *single festival at Rome*, which might not for the same reason be called by the same name.

The *primitive writers* frequently expose the folly and absurdity of this *heathenish custom* [ *i* ] : they *light up candles to God*, says *Lactantius*, as if he lived in the dark : and do not they deserve to pass for madmen,

[ *f* ] *Placure & Lychnuchi penfiles in delubris.*

*Plin. Hist. Nat. l. 34. 3.*

*Vidi Cupidinem argenteum cum Lampade.*

*Cic. in berr. 2.*

*Centum aras posuit, vigilemque sacraverat ignem.*

*Virg. Æn. 4. 200.*

[ *g* ] *Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1. c. 16.*

[ *h* ] *Καὶ τῇ δευτέρῃ ἑορτῇ κίεται λυχνοκαίη.* *Herod. l. 2. LXII. Edit. Lond.*

[ *i* ] *Hospin. de Orig. Templor. l. 2. 22.*

*who*

who offer lamps to the Author and Giver of  
Light?

In the collections of *old inscriptions*, we find many instances of presents and donations from private persons; of *lamps and candlesticks* to the *temples and altars* of their gods [k]: a piece of zeal, which continues still the same in modern *Rome*; where each Church abounds with *lamps of massy silver*; and sometimes even of *gold*; the *gifts of Princes*; and other persons of distinction: and it is surprizing to see, how great a number of this kind are perpetually burning before the *altars* of their *principal Saints*, or *miraculous Images*; as *St. Antony of Padua*, or the *Lady of Loretto*; as well as the vast profusion of *wax candles*; with which their Churches are illuminated on every great festival: when the *high altar* covered with *gold and silver plate*, brought out of their treasuries, and stuck full of *wax lights*, disposed in beautifull figures, looks more like the rich *side-board* of some great Prince, dressed out for a feast, than an altar to pay divine worship at.

[k] Cupidines ii. cum suis Lychnuchis & Lucernâ. Grut.  
Insc. 177. 3.

But a stranger will not be more surprized at the number of *lamps*, or *wax lights* burning before their *altars*, than at the number of *offerings*, or *votive gifts*, which are hanging all around them, in consequence of *vows*, made in the time of danger ; and in gratitude for deliverances and cures, wrought in sickness or distress : a practice so common among the *Heathens*, that no one *custom of antiquity* is so frequently mentioned by all their writers ; and many of their *original donaria*, or *votive offerings* are preserved to this day in the *cabinets of the curious* ; viz. *images of metal, stone, or clay*, as well as *legs, arms*, and other *parts of the body*, which had formerly been hung up in their *temples*, in testimony of some divine favor or cure effected by their *tutelar deity* in that particular member [1] : but the most common of all *offerings* were *pictures*, representing the history of the miraculous cure or deliverance, vouchsafed upon the vow of the donor.

[1] Vid. Montfauc. Antiq. T. 2. p. 1. l. 4. c. 4, 5, 6.



*Nunc, dea, nunc succurre mihi; nam  
posse mederi*

*Picta docet templis multa tabella tuis.*

Tibul. El. 1. 3.

Now, goddess, help, for thou canst help  
bestow,  
As all these pictures round thy altars  
shew.

A friend of *Diagoras the philosopher*, called the *Atheist*, having found him once in a temple, as the story is told by *Cicero* [m], You, says he, who think the Gods take no notice of human affairs, do not you see here by this number of pictures, how many people, for the sake of their vows, have been saved in storms at sea, and got safe into harbour? Yes, says *Diagoras*, I see how it is; for those are never painted, who happen to be drowned. The temples of *Æsculapius* were more especially rich in these offerings, which *Livy* says, were the price and pay for the cures, that he had wrought for the sick [n]: where they used always to hang

[m] Cic. Nat. Deor. 1. 3. 253.

[n] Tum donis dives erat, quæ remediorum salutarium ægri mercedem sacraverant Deo. Liv. 1. 45. 28.

up, and expose to common view, in tables of brass or marble, a catalogue of all the *miraculous cures*, which he had performed for his votaries [o] : a remarkable fragment of one of these tables is still remaining and published in *Gruter's* [p] *Collection*, having been found in the ruins of a *temple of that God*, in the *island of the Tiber* at *Rome* : upon which the *learned Montfaucon* makes this reflection ; that in it are either seen the *wiles of the Devil*, to *deceive the credulous* ; or *else the tricks of Pagan Priests*, *suborning men to counterfeit diseases and miraculous cures* [q].

Now this piece of superstition had been found of old so beneficial to the *priesthood*, that it could not fail of being taken into the scheme of the *Romish Worship* : where it reigns at this day in as full heighth and vigor, as in the *ages of Pagan Idolatry* ; and in so gross a manner, as to give scandal and offence even to some of their own

[o] Τὸ ἱερόν πλήρες ἔχοντες αἰεὶ τῶν τε καμνόντων, καὶ τῶν ἀνακειμένων πινάκων, ἐν οἷς ἀναγεγραμμένα τυχάνουσι αἱ θεραπεῖαι.  
Strabo. T. 1. 515.

[p] Gruter. Inscript. p. 71.

Et Montfauc. Atiq. T. 2. P. 1. l. 4. c. 6.

[q] Ibid.

communion. *Polydore Virgil*, after having described this practice of the antients, “ in the same manner, *says he*, do we  
 “ now offer up in our Churches little images  
 “ of wax; and as oft as any part of the  
 “ body is hurt, as the hand or foot, &c.  
 “ we presently make a vow to God, or  
 “ one of his Saints, to whom upon our recovery we make an offering of that hand  
 “ or foot in wax : which custom is now  
 “ come to that extravagance, that we do  
 “ the same thing for our cattle, which we  
 “ do for ourselves, and make offerings on  
 “ account of our oxen, horses, sheep ;  
 “ where a scrupulous man will question,  
 “ whether in this we imitate the religion  
 “ or the superstition of our ancestors [r].”

The *altar of St. Philip Neri*, says *Baronius* [s], “ shines with votive pictures and  
 images,

[r] Pol. Virg. de Inv. Rer. l. 5. 1.

[s] Baron. Ann. 1. An. 57. n. 162. It. Aring. Rom. Subter. l. 1. c. 30, it. l. 6. 27.

This *Philip Neri* is a Saint in high esteem in all parts of *Italy*, where he has many Churches dedicated to him : he was founder of the congregation of the oratory, and died about a century and half ago : his body lies under his altar, with the following inscription, in a fine Church called *Chiesa Nuova*, which was founded and built for the service



“ images, the proofs of as many miracles ;  
 “ receiving every day the additional luster  
 “ of fresh offerings from those, who have  
 “ been favored with fresh benefits :” amongst whom the present *Pope* himself pays, as I have been told, a yearly acknowledgment, for a miraculous deliverance, that he obtained by the invocation of *this Saint*, when he had like to have perished under the ruins of a house, overturned in an earthquake.

There is commonly so great a number of these *offerings* hanging up in their *Churches*, that instead of adding any beauty, they often give offence, by covering or ob-

of his congregation ; where we see his picture by *Guido*, and his statue by *Algardi*. Cardinal *Baronius*, who was one of his disciples, lies buried too in the same Church.

C O R P V S.

S. PHILIPPI NERII CONGR. ORATORII  
 FVNDATORIS

AB IPSO DORMITIONIS DIE ANNOS  
 QVATVOR ET QVADRAGINTA  
 INCORRVPTVM DIVINA

VIRTUTE SERVATVM OCVLIS FIDELIVM  
 EXPOSITVM A DILECTIS IN CHRISTO  
 FILIIS SVB EIVSDEM S. PATRIS ALTARI  
 PERPETVAE SEPVLTVRAE MORE MAIORVM  
 COMMENDATVM EST

ANNO SALVTIS. M.DC.XXXVIII.

structing

structing the sight of something more valuable and ornamental : which we find to have been the case likewise in the *old heathen temples* ; where the *priests* were obliged sometimes to take them down, for the obstruction, which they gave to the beauty of a fine pillar or altar [t]. For they consist chiefly, as has been said, of *arms* and *legs*, and little *figures* of *wood* or *wax*, but especially *pieces of board* painted, and sometimes indeed *fine pictures*, describing the manner of the deliverance obtained by the *miraculous interposition of the Saint* invoked : of which *offerings*, the *blessed Virgin* is so sure always, to carry off the greatest share, that it may truly be said of her, what *Juvenal* says of the *Goddeſs Isis*, whose religion was at that time in the greatest vogue at *Rome*, that the *painters* get *their livelihood out of her*.

*Pictores quis nescit ab Ifide paſci ?*

As once to *Isis*, now it may be said,  
That Painters to the *Virgin* owe their  
Bread.

[t] Ab his columnis, quæ incommodè opposita videbantur, signa amovit, &c. Liv. l. 40. 51.

As oft as I have had the curiosity to look over these *Donaria*, or *votive Offerings*, hanging round the *Shrines of their Images*, and consider the several stories of each, as they are either expressed in painting, or related in writing, I have always found them to be *mere copies*, or *verbal translations* of the *originals of Heathenism*: for the *vow* is often said to have been *divinely inspired*, or *expressly commanded*; and the cure and deliverance to have been wrought, either by the *visible apparition*, and *immediate hand of the tutelar Saint*, or by the notice of a *dream*, or some other *miraculous admonition* from heaven. “ There can be no doubt, “ *say their Writers* [*u*], but that the I- “ mages of our Saints often work signal “ miracles, by procuring health to the in- “ firm, and appearing to us often in dreams, “ to suggest something of great moment “ for our service.”

And what is all this, but a revival of the *old impostures*, and a repetition of the same

[*u*] Extra omnem controversiam est, Sanctorum Imagines mirifica designare miracula, ut & debilibus valetudo bona per eos concilietur, sæpeque in somniis apparentes optima quæque nobis consulant. Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 5.



*old stories*, of which the *ancient inscriptions* are full [w], with no other difference, than what the *Pagans* ascribed to the imaginary help of *their Deities*, the *Papists* as foolishly impute to the favor of *their Saints*? As may be seen by the few instances, that I have subjoined, out of the great plenty, which all *books of antiquities* will furnish: and whether the reflection of *Father Montfaucon* on the *Pagan Priests*, mentioned above, be not, in the very same case, as justly applicable to the *Romish Priests*, I must leave to the judgment of my Reader.

[w] SILVANO SALVTARI  
L. MANLIUS SATVRNINVS  
EX VISO POSVIT.  
Gruter. p. 65.

MINERVAE. MEMORI  
CAELIA. IVLIANA.  
INDVLGENTIA. MEDICINARUM  
EIVS GRAVI. INFIRMITATE.  
LIBERATA. D. P.

48.

SILVANO  
&c.  
SOMNIO MONITA  
ib. 62.

IOVI OPT. &c.  
FLAVIVS. COSMVS  
IVSSU DEI FECIT.  
20.

And that this is the stile also of votive Inscriptions among the *Papists*, we see by the following one in a Church at *Milan*.

DIVAE. SAVINAE, &c.  
LIVIA. EVPHEMIA.. IN  
ACERBO. STOMACHI  
CRVCIATV. OPEM NACTA.  
V. S. M. D. XI.

But

But the gifts and offerings of the kind, that I have been speaking of, are the fruits only of vulgar zeal, and the presents of inferior people; whilst Princes and great persons, as it used to be of old, [x] frequently make offerings of large vessels, lamps, and even statues of massy silver or gold; with diamonds, and all sorts of precious stones of incredible value; so that the Church of Loretto is now become a Proverb for it's riches of this sort, just as Apollo's Temple at Delphi was with the antients on the same account.

’Οὐδ’ ὅσα λαίνα ἔδος ἀφύτορ ἐντὸς ἑέρπει  
θαίβη Ἀπόλλων. Π. ι. 404.

Nor all the wealth Apollo's Temple holds  
Can purchase one day's life, &c.

In the famed treasury of this *Holy House*; one part consists, as it did likewise among the *Heathens*, of a *wardrobe*. For the very *Idols*, as *Tertullian* observes, *used to be dressed out in curious robes*, of the choicest

[x] Consul Apollini, Æsculapio, Saluti dona vovere, & dare signa inaurata jussus: quæ vovit, deditque. Liv. l. 40. 37.

stuffs and fashion [y]. While they were shewing us therefore the great variety of rich habits, with which that treasury abounds; some covered with *precious stones*, others more curiously embroidered by such a *Queen*, or *Princess*, for the use of the *miraculous Image*; I could not help recollecting the picture which *old Homer* draws of *Queen Hecuba of Troy*, prostrating herself before the *miraculous Image of Pallas*, with a present of the *richest and best wrought gown*, that she was mistress of.

Τῶν ἐν αἰεραμένη Ἑκάβῃ φέρε δῶρον Ἀθήνη,  
Ὅς κάλλιστον ἔλυ ποικίλμασιν ἠδὲ μέγιστον;  
Ἀσὴρ δ' ὡς ἀπέλαμπε, &c. II. ζ. 293.

A gown she chose, the best and noblest  
far,  
Sparkling with rich embroidery, like a  
star, &c.

The mention of *Loretto* puts me in mind of the surprize, that I was in, at the first sight of the *holy Image*: for it's face is as black as a *Negro's*; so that one would take it rather for the representation

[y] Cum ipsis etiam Idolis induantur prætextæ & trabæ,  
&c. De Idolat. p. 116. Edit. Rigalt.



of a *Proserpine*, or *infernal Deity*, than, what they impiously stile it, of the *Queen of Heaven*. But I soon recollected, that this very circumstance of it's complexion, made it but resemble the more exactly the *old Idols of Paganism*, which, in *sacred* as well as *profane Writers*, are described to be *black with the perpetual smoak of lamps and incense* [z].

When a man is once engaged in reflections of this kind, imagining himself in some *Heathen Temple*, and expecting as it were some *sacrifice*, or other *piece of Paganism* to ensue, he will not be long in suspense, before he sees the finishing act and last scene of *genuin Idolatry*, in crouds of bigot votaries, prostrating themselves before some *Image of wood or stone*, and paying divine honors to an *Idol* of their own erecting. Should they squabble with us here about the meaning of the word, *Idol*, St. *Jerom* has determined it to the very case in question, telling us, that by *Idols* are to be understood the *Images of the dead* [a]: and

[z] Baruch. 6. 19, 21. Arnob. 1. 6.

[a] *Idola intelligimus Imagines mortuorum.* Hier. Com. in Isa. c. 37.

the

the worshippers of such Images are used always in the *style of the Fathers*, as terms synonymous and equivalent to *Heathens* or *Pagans* [b].

As to the practice itself, it was condemned by many of the wisest Heathens, and for several ages, even in *Pagan Rome*, was thought impious and detestable: for *Numa*, we find, prohibited it to the *old Romans*, nor would suffer any Images in their *Temples*: which constitution they observed religiously, says *Plutarch* [c], for the first *hundred and seventy years of the City*. But as *Image worship* was thought abominable even by some *Pagan Princes*, so by some of the *Christian Emperors* it was forbidden on pain of death [d]: not because these Images were the representations of *Dæmons*, or *false Gods*, but because they

[b] Innumeri sunt in Græcia exterisque nationibus, qui se in discipulatum Christi tradiderunt, non sine ingenti odio eorum qui simulacra venerantur. Pamphili Apol. pro Orig. vid. Hieron. Op. Tom. 5. p. 233. Ed. Par.

[c] Vid. Plutar. in Vit. Num. p. 65. C.

[d] Poenæ capitis subjugari præcipimus, quos simulacra colere constiterit. Vid. Gothof. Comment. de statu Pagan. sub Christian. Imperatorib. Leg. 6. p. 7.

were *vain senseless Idols*, the *work of men's hands*, and for that reason unworthy of any honor: and all the instances and overt-acts of such worship, described and condemned by them, are exactly the same with what the *Papists* practise at this day, viz. *lighting up candles; burning incense; hanging up garlands, &c.* as may be seen in the *law of Theodosius* before-mentioned; which confiscates that *house or land, where any such act of Gentile superstition had been committed* [e]. These Princes, who were influenced, we may suppose, in their constitutions of this sort, by the advice of their bishops, did not think *Paganism* abolished, till the *adoration of Images* was utterly extirpated; which was reckoned always the *principal* of those *Gentile Rites*, that agreeably to the sense of the *purest ages of Christianity*, are never mentioned in the *imperial laws*, without the epithets of *prophane, damnable, impious, &c.* [f].

[e] In nulla urbe sensu carentibus simulacris, vel accendat lumina, imponat thura, festa suspendat.

Si quis vero mortali opere facta, & ævum passura simulacra imposito thure venerabitur—is utpote violatæ religionis reus, ea domo seu possessione multabitur, in qua eum constiterit gentilitia superstitione famulatum, ibid. Leg. 12. p. 15.

[f] Ibid. Leg. 17. 20.

What



What opinion then can we have of the present practice of the *Church of Rome*, but that by a change only of *name*, they have found means to retain the *thing*; and by substituting *their Saints* in the place of the old *Demigods*, have but set up *Idols of their own*, instead of those of their *Forefathers*? In which it is hard to say, whether their assurance, or their address is more to be admired, who have the face to make that the principal part of *Christian worship*, which the *first Christians* looked upon as the most criminal part even of *Paganism*, and have found means to extract gain and great revenues out of a practice, which in *primitive times* would have cost a man both life and estate.

But our notion of the *Idolatry* of modern *Rome* will be much heightened still and confirmed, as oft as we follow them into those *Temples*, and to those very *Altars*, which were built originally by *their Heathen ancestors*, the old *Romans*, to the honor of their *Pagan Deities*; where we shall hardly see any other alteration, than the *shrine* of some old *Hero* filled by the meaner

meaner statue of some *modern Saint* : nay, they have not always, as I am well informed; given themselves the trouble of making even this change, but have been content sometimes to take up with the *old Image*, just as they found it; after *baptizing* it onely, as it were, or consecrating it anew, by the imposition of a *Christian name*. This *their antiquaries* do not scruple to put strangers in mind of, in shewing their *Churches*; and it was, I think, in that of *St. Agnes*, where they shewed me an *antique statue* of a *young Bacchus*, which with a new name, and some little change of drapery, stands now worshipped under the title of a *female Saint*.

*Tully* reproaches *Clodius*, for having publicly dedicated the statue of a common strumpet, under the name and title of the Goddess *Liberty*: a practice, still frequent with the present *Romans*, who have scarce a fine image or picture of a *female Saint*, which is not said to have been designed originally by the sculptor or painter, for the representation of his own mistress: and who dares, may we say ironically with the old *Roman*,  
[g] to

[g] *to violate such a Goddess as this; the statue of a whore?*

The noblest *Heathen Temple* now remaining in the world, is the *Pantheon* or *Rotunda*; which, as the inscription [b] over the portico informs us, having been *impiously dedicated of old by Agrippa to Jove and all the Gods, was piously reconsecrated by Pope Boniface the fourth, to the blessed Virgin and all the Saints.* With this single alteration, it serves as exactly for all the purposes of the *Popish*, as it did for the *Pagan worship*, for which it was built. For as in the *old Temple*, every one might find the *God* of his country, and address himself to that *Deity*, whose religion he was most devoted to; so it is the same thing now; every one chuses the *Patron* whom

[g] Hanc Deam quisquam violare audeat, imaginem meretricis? Cic. pro Dom. 43.

[b] PANTHEON, &c.  
Ab Agrippa Augusti Genero  
Impie Jovi, Cæterisque Mendacibus Diis  
A Bonifacio IIII. Pontifice  
Deiparæ & S. S. Christi Martyribus Pie  
Dicatum,  
&c.

M

he



he likes best ; and one may see here *different services*, going on at the same time at *different altars*, with distinct congregations around them, just as the inclinations of the people lead them, to the worship of this or that particular *Saint*.

And what better title can the *new Demi-gods* shew, to the adoration now paid to them, than the *old ones*, whose shrines they have usurped ? Or how comes it to be less criminal to *worship Images*, erected by the *Pope*, than those which *Agrippa*, or that, which *Nebuchadnezzar* set up ? If there be any real difference, most people, I dare say, will be apt to determine in favor of the *old possessors* : for those *heroes of antiquity* were raised up into *Gods*, and received *divine honors*, for some *signal benefits*, of which they had been the *authors* to mankind ; as the *invention of arts and sciences* ; or of something highly usefull and necessary to life [i] : whereas of the *Romish Saints*,

[i] Suscepit autem vita hominum, consuetudoque communis, ut beneficio excellentes viros in cœlum fama, & voluntate tollerent, &c. Cic. Nat. Deor. l. 2. 223.

Imitantem Herculem illum, quem hominum fama, beneficiorum memor, in concilium cœlestium collocavit. Off. 3. 299.

it

it is certain, that many of them were never heard of, but in their own *legends or fabulous histories*; and many more, instead of any services done to mankind, owe all the honors now paid to them, to their *vices* or their *errors*; whose merit, like *that of Demetrius in the Acts* [k], was their skill of raising rebellions in defence of *an Idol*, and throwing kingdoms into convulsions, for the sake of some *gainful imposture*.

And as it is in the *Panthæon*, it is just the same in all the other *Heathen Temples*, that still remain in *Rome*; they have onely pulled down *one Idol*, to set up *another*; and changed rather the name, than the object of their worship. Thus the little *Temple of Vesta*, near the *Tiber*, mentioned by *Horace* [l], is now possessed by the *Madonna of the Sun*; [m] that of *Fortuna Virilis*, by *Mary the Egyptian*; [n] that of *Saturn*,

[k] Act. Apost. xix. 23.

[l] Carm. l. 1. 2.

[m] Rom. Mod. Giorn. 2. Rione di Ripa. 5.

[n] Ibid. 4.

[o] (where the public treasure was antiently kept) by St. *Adrian* ; that of *Romulus and Remus* in the *Via Sacra*, by two other brothers, *Cosmas* and *Damianus* ; [p] that of *Antonine the Godly*, by *Laurence the Saint* [q] : but for my part, I should sooner be tempted, to prostrate myself before the statue of a *Romulus* or an *Antonine*, than that of a *Laurence* or a *Damian* ; and give divine honors rather with *Pagan Rome*, to the founders of empires, than with *Popish Rome*, to the founders of monasteries.

At the foot of *Mount Palatin*, in the way between the *Forum* and *Circus Maximus*, on the very spot, where *Romulus* was believed to have been suckled by the wolf, there stands another little round *Temple*, dedicated to him in the early times of the republic, into which, for the present eleva-

[o] Ib. Gior. 5. Rione di Campitelli. 15.

[p] Urbanus VIII. Pont. Max. Templum Geminis  
 Urbis Conditoribus Superstitiosè dicatum  
 A Felice IIII. S. S. Cosmæ & Damiano Fratribus  
 Piè Consecratum, vetustate Labefactatum  
 In splendidiorem Formam Redegit  
 Ann. Sal. M.DCXXXIII.

[q] Ibid. 16.

tion



tion of the soil without, we now descend by a great number of steps. It is mentioned by *Dionysius of Halycarnassus*, who says, that in his time there stood in it *a brazen statue of antique work, of the wolf giving suck to the infant Brothers* [r]; which is thought by many to be the same, which is still preserved and shewn in the capitol: though I take this rather, which now remains, to have been another of the same kind, that stood originally in the capitol, and is mentioned by *Cicero* to have been there struck with lightning [s]; of which it retains to this day the evident marks in one of it's hinder legs: it is however to one or the other of these celebrated statues, that *Virgil*, as *Servius* assures us, alludes in that elegant description:

—Geminos huic ubera circum  
Ludere pendent pueros & lambere matrem

[r] Καὶ τέμενος ἐστὶ ἐνθα εἰκὼν κίτται τῇ πάτρει, λύκαινα παιδοῖς δυοὶ τὰς μαστὰς ἐπέχουσα, χάλκεα ποιήματα παλαιᾶς ἐρσασίας. Dion. Hal. 1. 1. 64. Edit. Hudson.

[s] Tactus est etiam ille, qui hanc urbem condidit, Romulus, quem inauratum in Capitolio parvum atque lactantem, uberibus lupinis inhiantem fuisse meministis. Orat. in Catil.

*Impavidos : Illam tereti cervice reflexam  
Mulcere alternos, & fingere corpora linguâ.*

Æn. 8. 631.

The martial twins beneath their mother  
lay,  
And hanging on her dugs, with wanton  
play,  
Securely suck'd ; whilst she reclines her  
head  
To lick their tender limbs, and form  
them as they fed.

But to return to my story: from the tradition of the wonderful escape, which *Romulus* had in this very place, when exposed in his infancy to perish in the *Tiber* ; as soon as he came to be a God, he was looked upon as singularly propitious to the health and safety of young children : from which notion, it became a practice for nurses and mothers, to present their *sickly infants* before his shrine in this little *Temple* [t], in con-

[t] A questo Tempio dedicato a Romolo portarano le Donne Romane ad offerir i loro figliuolini, quando pativano di qualche infirmità ; e perche questa usanza andavano seguendo l'istisse ancora fatte Christiane, &c. Rom. Moderna. Giornata 2da. c. 36. Rione di Ripa.

fidence

fidence of a cure or relief by his favor :  
 now when this *Temple* was converted after-  
 wards into a *Church*; lest any piece of su-  
 perstition should be lost, or the people think  
 themselves sufferers by the change, in losing  
 the benefit of such a protection for their  
 children; care was taken to find out in the  
 place of the *Heathen God*, a *Christian Saint*,  
 who had been exposed too in his infancy,  
 and found by chance like *Romulus*; and  
 for the same reason, might be presumed to  
 be just as fond of children, as their *old*  
*Deity* had been : and thus the worship paid  
 to *Romulus*, being now transferred to *The-*  
*odorus*, the old superstition still subsists, and  
 the custom of presenting children at *this*  
*shrine* continues to this day without inter-  
 mission; of which I myself have been a  
 witness, having seen, as oft as I looked into  
*this Church*, ten or a dozen women decent-  
 ly dressed, each with a *child* in her lap, sit-  
 ting with silent reverence before the *altar of*  
*the Saint*, in expectation of his *miraculous*  
*influence* on the health of the infant.

In consecrating these *Heathen Temples* to  
 the Popish worship, that the change might  
 be the less offensive, and the *old superstition*



as little shocked as possible, they generally observed some resemblance of quality and character in the *Saint*, whom they substituted to the *old Deity*: “ If in converting  
 “ the profane worship of the *Gentiles* (says  
 “ the *Describer of modern Rome* [*u*]) to  
 “ the pure and sacred worship of the  
 “ Church, the faithful use to follow some  
 “ rule and proportion, they have certainly  
 “ hit upon it here, in dedicating to the  
 “ *Madonna*, or *holy Virgin*, the Temple  
 “ formerly sacred to the *bona Dea*, or  
 “ good Goddess.” But they have more frequently on these occasions had regard rather to a *similitude of name* between the *old* and *new Idol*. Thus in a place formerly sacred to *Apollo*, there now stands the *Church of Apollinaris*; built there, as they tell us, [*x*] that the *profane name of that*

[*u*] Si nel rivoltare il profano culto de Gentili nel sacro e vero, osservarono i fedeli qualche proportione, qui la ritrovarono assai conveniente nel dedicare a Maria Vergine un Tempio, ch'era della bona Dea——Rom. Mod. Gior. 2. Rion. di Ripa 10.

[*x*] La Chiesa di S. Apollinari fu fabbricata in questo luogo da' Christiani; affinche il profano nome d' Apolline fusse convertito nel santo nome di questo glorioso Martire. Ibid. Gio. 3. 21.

*Deity,*

*Deity*, might be converted into the *glorious name of this Martyr* : and where there antiently stood a *Temple of Mars*, they have erected a *Church to Martina*, with this inscription ;

*Martirii gestans virgo Martina coronam,  
Ejecto hinc Martis numine, Templum tenet.*

*Mars* hence expell'd ; *Martina*, martyr'd  
maid,  
Claims now the worship, which to him  
was paid.

In another place, I have taken notice of an *Altar* erected to *St. Baccho* [y] ; and in their stories of their *Saints*, have observed the names of *Quirinus*, *Romula* & *Redempta*, *Concordia*, *Nympha*, *Mercurius* [z] : which, though they may, for any thing that I know, have been the genuin names of *Christian Martyrs*, yet cannot but give occasion to suspect, that some of them at least have been formed out of a corruption of the

[y] Ibid. Gior. 6. 37.

[z] Aringh. Rom. Subter. l. 2. 21. l. 3. 12. l. 4. 16, 22.  
l. 5. 4.

*old names* ; and that the adding of a modern termination, or *Italianizing* the *old name* of a *Deity*, has given existence to some of their present *Saints* : thus the corruption of the word *Soraete* (the old name of a mountain mentioned by *Horace* [a] in fight of *Rome*) has, according to Mr. *Addison*, added one Saint to the *Roman Calendar* ; being now softened, [b] *because it begins with an S*, into *St. Oreste* ; in whose honor a monastery is founded on the place : a change very natural, if we consider that the *title of Saint* is never written by the *Italians* at length, but expressed commonly by the single letter *S.* as *S. Oraete* : and thus this *holy Mountain* stands now under the protection of a *Patron*, whose being and power is just as imaginary, as that of its old guardian *Apollo*.

*Sancti custos Soraetis Apollo.* Virg. *Æn.* 9.

No suspicion of this kind will appear extravagant to those, who are at all acquainted with the *History of Popery* ; which a-

[a] *Carm.* l. 1. 9.

[b] *Addison's Travels from Pesaro, &c. to Rome.*



bounds with instances of the grossest forgeries both of *Saints* and *Reliques*, which, to the scandal of many even among themselves [c], have been imposed for genuine on the poor ignorant people. It is certain, that in the earlier ages of Christianity, the *Christians* often made free with the *sepulchral stones of Heathen monuments*, which being ready cut to their hands, they converted to their own use; and turning downwards the side, on which the *old epitaph* was engraved, used either to inscribe a new one on the other side, or leave it perhaps without any *inscription* at all, as they are often found in the *Catacombs of Rome* [d]. Now this one custom has frequently been the occasion of ascribing *Martyrdom* and *Sainthood* to persons and names of mere *Pagans*.

[c] Utinam hanc religionem imitarentur, qui sanctorum recens absque certis nominibus inventorum fictas historias comminiscuntur ad confusionem verarum historiarum, imo & qui Paganorum Inscriptiones aliquando pro Christianis vulgant, &c. Mabill. Iter. Ital. p. 225.

[d] Ab immanibus enim & pervetustis superstitiosæ urbis constructionibus atque sepulchris ad suos obtegendos tumulos Christiani lapides non raro auferre consueverant. Aringh. Rom. Subt. l. 3. c. 22.

Mabillon

*Mabillon* gives a remarkable instance of it in an *old stone*, found on the grave of a *Christian* with this inscription. [ *e* ].

D. M.  
IVLIA EVODIA  
FILIA FECIT.  
MATRI.

And because in the same grave there was found likewise a *glass vial*, or *lacrymatory vessel*, tinged with a reddish color, which they call [ *f* ] *blood*, and look upon as a certain proof of *martyrdom*, this *Julia Evodia*, though undoubtedly a *Heathen*, was presently adopted both for *Saint* and *Martyr*, on the authority of an *inscription*, that appears evidently to have been one of those above-mentioned, and borrowed from a *heathen Sepulcher*. But whatever the party there buried might have been, whether *Heathen* or *Christian*; it is certain however,

[ *e* ] Vid. Mabill. Ibid.

[ *f* ] Si forte rubore quodam in imo tincta vitrea ampulla fuerit, pro argumento Martyrii habetur. Mont. Diar. It. p. 118.

that

that it could not be *Evodia herself*, but her mother only, whose name is not there signified.

The same author mentions some *original papers*, which he found in the *Barbarine Library*, giving a pleasant account of a negotiation between the *Spaniards* and *Pope Urban the VIIIth*, in relation to this very subject [ g ]. The *Spaniards*, it seems, have a *Saint*, held in great reverence in some parts of *Spain*, called *Viar* ; for the farther encouragement of whose worship, they solicited the *Pope*, to grant some *special indulgencies* to his altars ; and upon the *Pope's* desiring to be better acquainted first with his character, and the proofs, which they had of his *sainthood*, they produced a stone with these *antique letters* S. VIAR. which the antiquaries readily saw to be a small fragment of some *old Roman Inscription*, in memory of one, who had been *Præfectus*. VIARum, or *overseer of the highways*.

[ g ] Alterum notatu dignum, quod Urbanus ab Hispanis quibusdam interpellatus de concedendis indulgentiis ob cultum Sancti, cui nomen VIAR, &c. allatus est lapis in quo hæ literæ reliquæ erant S. VIAR, &c. Vid. Mabill. Iter. Ital. p. 145.

But



But we have in *England* an instance still more ridiculous, of a *fictitious saintship*, in the case of a certain *Saint*, called *Amphibolus*; who, according to our *Monkish Historians*, was *Bishop of the isle of Man*, and *fellow Martyr and Disciple of St. Alban*: yet the learned *Bishop Usher* has given good reasons to convince us, that he owes the honor of his *saintship*, to a mistaken passage in the *old acts or legends of St. Alban* [b]: where the *Amphibolus* mentioned, and since revered as a *Saint and Martyr*, was nothing more than the *cloak*, which *Alban* happened to have, at the time of his execution; being a word derived from the *Greek*, and signifying a *rough shaggy cloak*, which *ecclesiastical* persons usually wore in that age.

They pretend to shew us here at *Rome*, two *original impressions* of our *Saviour's Face*, on two different *handkerchiefs*; the one, sent a present by himself to *Agbarus Prince of Edessa*, who by letter had desired

[b] Usher. de Britan. Eccles. primord. c. 14. p. 539. 4<sup>to</sup>.  
It. Bp. Floyd's Histor. Acc. of Ch. Govern. in Gr.  
Brit. c. 7. p. 151.

a picture of him ; the other, given by him at the time of his execution, to a *Saint*, or *holy woman* named *Veronica*, upon a *handkerchief*, which she had lent him to wipe his face on that occasion : both which handkerchiefs are still preserved, as they affirm, and now kept with the utmost reverence ; the first in *St. Silvester's Church* ; the second in *St. Peter's* ; where in honor of this *sacred relique*, there is a fine *altar* built by *Pope Urban the VIIIth*, with a statue of *Veronica* herself, with the following inscription [i].

SALVATORIS IMAGINEM VERONICÆ  
 SVDARIO EXCEPTAM  
 VT LOCI MAIESTAS DECENTER  
 CVSTODIRET URBANVS VIII.  
 PONT. MAX.  
 MARMOREVM SIGNVM  
 ET ALTARE ADDIDIT CONDITORIVM  
 EXTRVXIT ET ORNAVIT.

[i] Vid. Aringh. Rom. Subterr. Tom. 2. p. 453.

There is a prayer in their books of offices, ordered by the rubric, to be addressed to this sacred and miraculous picture, in the following terms.—*Conduct us, O thou blessed figure, to our proper home, where we may behold the pure face of Christ.*—See Conform. of Anc. & Mod. Ceremonies. p. 158.

But

But notwithstanding the authority of *this Pope*, and his *inscription*, this VERONICA, as one of their best authors has shewn [k], like *Amphibolus* before-mentioned, was not any *real person*, but the name given to the *picture itself* by the *old writers*, who mention it; being formed by blundering and confounding the words VERA ICON, or *true image*, the title inscribed perhaps, or given originally to the handkerchief, by the first contrivers of the imposture.

These stories however, as fabulous and childish as they appear to men of sense, are yet urged by grave authors in defence of their *Image-worship*, as certain proofs of its *divine origin*, and sufficient to confound all the *impious opposers* of it [l].

I shall

[k] Hæc Christi Imago a recentioribus VERONICÆ dicitur: imaginem ipsam veteres VERONICAM appellabant, &c. Mabill. Iter. Ital. p. 88.

[l] Imaginem hanc ab Edeffenorum civitate translata[m], condigno ad hæc usque tempora venerationis cultu in D. Silvestri ecclesiâ, veluti divinum quid & perenne sacrarum imaginum monumentum, pariter ac propugnaculum adversus infanos



I shall add nothing more on this article, than that whatever worship was paid by the *antients* to their *heroes* or *inferior deities*, the *Romanists* now pay the same to their *Saints* and *Martyrs*; as their *own inscriptions* plainly declare; which, like those mentioned above of *St. Martina*, and the *Pantheon*, generally signify, that the *honors*, which of old had been impiously given in that place to the false God, are now piously and rightly transferred to the *Christian Saint*: or as one of their celebrated *Poets* expresses himself in regard to *St. George*.

*Ut Martem Latii, sic nos Te, Dive Georgi  
Nunc colimus, &c.* Mantuan.

As *Mars* our Fathers once ador'd, so now  
To Thee, O *George*, we humbly prostrate  
bow.

infanos Iconoclastas asservari, & suspiciendam fidelibus adorandamque proponi.

Sacrosancta autem Redemptoris Imago, gemmarum The-  
sauris quibusque longe anteferenda, in Vaticana Basilica, quo  
par est venerationis cultu asservatur. Aring. Rom. Subt.  
T. 2. l. 5. c. 4.

Effigie più d'ogni altra sublime è adoranda, per esser  
non fattura di mano Angelica o d'humana, mà del Fattor  
medesimo degli Angeli & degli huomini. Rom. Mod.  
Gior. 1. Rion. di Bor.

N

And

And every where through *Italy*, one sees their *sacred inscriptions* speaking the pure language of *Paganism*, and ascribing the same *Powers, Characters* and *Attributes* to their *Saints*, which had formerly been ascribed to the *Heathen Gods*; as the few here exhibited will evince.

Popish Inscriptions.      Pagan Inscriptions.

[*m*]                      MERCVRIO ET MINERVAE  
MARIA ET FRANCISCE      DIIS TVTELARIB. [*n*]  
TUTELARES MEI.

DIVO EVSTORGIO      DII QVI HVIC TEMPLO  
QVI HVIC TEMPLO      PRAESIDENT.  
PRAESIDET.

NVMINI.                      NVMINI  
DIVI GEORGII              MERCVRII SACR.  
POLLENTIS. POTENTIS      HERCVLI. VICTORI.  
INVICTI.              POLLENTI. POTENTI  
INVICTO.

PRAESTITI IOVI  
DIVIS                      S.  
PRAESTITIBVS IVVANTIBVS      DIIS.  
GEORGIO. STEPHANOQVE      DEABVS  
CVM DEO OPT. MAX.      QVE. CVM  
IOVE.

[*m*] Vid. Boldonii Epigraphica p. 439. It. p. 348. It. p. 422. It. 649.

[*n*] Gruter. Corp. Inscript. p. 50. It. Cic. Or. pro Lege Man. 15. It. Grut. p. 54. It. p. 50. It. p. 22. It. Ib. p. 2.

*Boldonius*

*Boldonius* censures the author of the last inscription, for the absurdity of putting the *Saints before God himself*; and imitating too closely the *antient* inscription, which I have set against it, where the same impropriety is committed in regard to *Jupiter*.

As to that celebrated *act of Popish Idolatry*, the *Adoration of the Host*; I must confess, that I cannot find the least resemblance of it in any part of the *Pagan Worship*: and as oft as I have been standing by at *Mass*, and seen the whole congregation prostrate on the ground, in the humblest posture of adoring, at the *elevation of this consecrated piece of bread*; I could not help reflecting on a passage of *Tully*, where speaking of the absurdity of the *Heathens* in the choice of *their Gods*, *but was any man*, says he, *ever so mad, as to take that which he feeds upon, for a God* [o]? This was an extravagance reserved for *Popery* alone; and what an *old Roman* could not but think too gross, even for *Ægyptian Idolatry* to swallow, is now become the *prin-*

[o] Sed ecquem tam amentem esse putas, qui illud, quo vescatur, Deum credat esse? Cic. de Nat. Deor. 3.



*cial part of Worship, and the distinguishing Article of Faith, in the Creed of modern Rome.*

But their *temples* are not the only places where we see the proofs and overt-acts of their *superstition*: the whole face of the country has the visible *characters* of *Paganism* upon it; and where-ever we look about us, we cannot but find, as St. Paul did in *Athens* [p], clear evidence of it's being possessed by a *superstitious and idolatrous* people.

The *old Romans*, we know, had *their Gods*, who presided peculiarly over the *roads, streets and highways*; called *Viales, Semitales, Compitales*: whose little *temples* or *altars* decked with flowers, or whose *statues* at least, coarsly carved of wood or stone, were placed at convenient distances in the public ways, for the benefit of travellers, who used to step aside to pay their devotions to these *rural Shrines*, and beg a prosperous journey and safety in their tra-

[p] Act. Apost. xvii, 17.

vels [ *q* ]. Now this custom prevails still so generally in all *popish countries*, but especially in *Italy*, that one can see no other difference between the *old* and *present superstition*, than that of changing the name of the *Deity*, and *christening* as it were the *old Hecate in triviis*, by the new name of *Maria in Trivio*; by which title, I have observed one of their Churches dedicated in this city [ *r* ]: and as the Heathens used to paint over the ordinary *Statues of their Gods*, with *red* or some such gay color [ *s* ], so I have oft observed the coarse *Images of these Saints* so daubed over with a gaudy red, as to resemble exactly the description of the *God Pan* in *Virgil*.

[ *q* ] Ut religiosi viantium moris est, cum aliquis locus, aut aliquis locus sanctus in via oblatus est, votum postulare, donum apponere, paulisper assidere.

Neque justius religiosam moram viatori objecerit aut ara floribus redimita — aut truncus dolamine effigiatus, &c.

Apulei. Florid. 1.

Invoco vos, Lares viales, ut me bene juvetis.

Plaut. Merc. 5. 2.

[ *r* ] Rom. Modern. Gior. Rion. di Colonna. c. 11.

[ *s* ] Fictilem fuisse & ideo miniari solitum. Plin. Hist. N. l. 35. 12. & a Censoribus Jovem miniandum locari. Ibid.

l. 33. 7. It. Pausan. 2. 2.

N 3

*Sanguineis*

*Sanguines ebuli baccis minioque rubentem.*  
Ecl. 10.

In passing along the road, it is common to see travellers on their knees before these *rustic altars*; which none ever presume to approach without some act of reverence; and those, who are most in haste, or at a distance, are sure to pull off their hats at least, in token of respect: and I took notice, that our postilions used to look back upon us, to see how we behaved on such occasions, and seemed surprized at our passing so negligently before places esteemed so sacred.

But besides these *Images* and *Altars*, there are frequently erected on the road huge *wooden crosses* [t], dressed out with flowers, and hung round with the trifling offerings of the country people; which always put me in mind of the *superstitious veneration*, which the *Heathens* used to pay

[t] Sanctæ Imagines & Cruces in viis publicis eriguntur, & nos propter Deum, & puram erga sanctos ejus fidem, sancta ejusmodi ubique erecta adoramus & salutamus. Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 6.



to some old *trunks of trees* or posts, set up in the highways, which they held *sacred*, [u] or of that *venerable oak* in *Ovid*, covered with *garlands* and *votive offerings*.

*Stabat in his ingens annoso robore quercus;  
Una nemus : Vittæ mediam, memoresque  
tabellæ*

*Sertaq; cingebant, voti argumenta potentis.*

Met. 8.

Reverend with Age a stately Oak there  
stood,  
It's Branches widely stretch'd, itself a  
Wood,  
With Ribbands, Garlands, Pictures cover'd  
o'er,  
The Fruits of pious Vows from Rich  
and Poor.

This description of the *Pagan Oak* puts me in mind of a story, that I have met with here, of a *Popish Oak* very like it, *viz.* how a certain person devoted to the worship of the *Virgin*, hung up a *picture of*

[u] Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris

Seu vetus in Trivio florida ferta Lapis.

Tibul. El. 1. 11.

*ber* in an *Oak*, that he had in his vineyard, which grew so famous for *it's miracles*, that the *Oak* soon became covered with *votive offerings*, and *rich presents* from distant countries, so as to furnish a fund at last for the building of a *great Church* to the *miraculous picture*; which now stands dedicated in this city, under the title of *St. Mary of the Oak* [x].

But what gave me still the greater notion of the superstition of these countries, was to see those *little Oratories*, or *rural Shrines*, sometimes placed under the cover of a *tree* or *grove*; agreeably to the descriptions of *the old idolatry*, in the *sacred* as well as *profane* writers [y]; or more generally raised on some *eminence*, or, in the *phrase of Scripture*, on *high places*; the constant scene of *idolatrous worship* in all ages; it being an universal opinion among the *Hea-*

[x] Essendo egli divotissimo della Madonna, fece dipingere l'immagine di lei, e l'appese ad una Quercia — dove cominciò a manifestarsi con molti miracoli, intanto che fino dall' Africa, e da Constantinopoli l'erano mundati voti in tanta quantità, che vi si fece una gran Chiesa—Rom. Modern. Gior. 3. c. 30. Rion. della Reg.

[y] *Lucus & Ara Dianæ. Hor.*

*thens,*

*thens*, that the Gods in a peculiar manner loved to reside on *eminences* or *tops of mountains* [z]: which *Pagan notion* prevails still so generally with the *Papists*, that there is hardly a *rock* or *precipice*, how dreadful or difficult soever of access, that has not an *Oratory*, or *Altar*, or *Crucifix* at least planted on the *top* of it.

Among the rugged *mountains of the Alps* in *Savoy*, very near to a little town called *Modana*, there stands on the *top of a rock*, a *chapel*, with a *miraculous Image* of our *Lady*, which is visited with great devotion by the people, and sometimes, we were told, by the *King himself*; being famous, it seems, for a *miracle* of a singular kind, (*viz.*) the restoring of *dead-born children to life*; but so far onely, as to make them capable of *Baptism*, after which they again expire: and our landlord assured me, that there was daily proof of the truth of this *miracle*, in children brought from all quarters to be presented before this Shrine; who never failed to shew manifest tokens of life, by *stretch-*

[z] Ἄνδρες δ' ἐν κορυφαῖσι καθέζοντο κύδαι γαίων, Il. θ. 50.

Tuque ex tuo edito Monte Latiali, sancte Jupiter.

Cic. pro Mill.

ing



*ing out their arms, or opening their eyes, or even sometimes making water, whilst they were held by the priest in presence of the Image.* All which appeared so ridiculous to a *French* gentleman, who was with me at the place, but had not heard the story from our landlord, that he looked upon it as a banter or fiction of my own, till I brought him to my author, who with his wife, as well as our *Voiturins*, very seriously testified the truth of it ; and added farther, that when the *French* army passed that way in the last war, they were so impious, as to throw down this *sacred Image* to the bottom of a vast precipice hard by it, which though of wood only, was found below entire and unhurt by the fall, and so replaced in it's *Shrine*, with greater honor than ever, by the attestation of this *new miracle*.

On the top of *Mount Senis*, the highest mountain of the *Alps*, in the same passage of *Savoy*, covered with perpetual snow, they have another *Chapel*, in which they perform divine service once a year, in the *Month of August* ; and sometimes, as our guides informed us, to the destruction of  
the

the whole congregation, by the accident of a sudden tempest in a place so elevated and exposed. And this surely comes up to the description of that worship, which the *Jews* were commanded to extirpate from the face of the earth: “ Ye shall utterly  
 “ destroy the places wherein the nations served their Gods, upon the high  
 “ mountains and upon the hills, and under every green tree : And ye shall overthrow their altars, break their pillars,  
 “ burn their groves, and hew down the graven Images of *their Gods* [a].”

When we enter their towns, the case is still the same, as it was in the country ; we find every where the same marks of *Idolatry*, and the same reasons to make us fancy, that we are still treading *Pagan ground* ; whilst at every corner we see *Images* and *Altars*, with *lamps* or *candles* burning before them ; exactly answering to the descriptions of the *antient writers* [b] ;

[a] Deuteron. xii. 2, 3.

[b] Ἀγάλματα τῶν ἐν ἀγορᾷ θεῶν. Xenoph. l. 4. It. Eurip. Elec. 387. Μεταὶ δὲ Διὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγυιαί, &c. Lucian. in Prometh.

Omnibus vicis Statuæ, ad eas Thus & Cerei. Cic. Off. 3. 26.  
 and

and to what *Tertullian* reproaches the *Heathens* with, that *their streets, their markets, their baths were not without an idol* [c]. But above all, in the *pomp* and *solemnity* of their *Holy-days*, and especially their *religious processions*, we see the genuin remains of *Heathenism*, and proof enough to convince us, that this is still the *same Rome*, which *old Numa* first tamed and civilized by the *arts of religion* : who, as *Plutarch* says [d],  
 “ by the institution of supplications and  
 “ processions to the Gods, which inspire  
 “ reverence, whilst they give pleasure to  
 “ the spectators, and by pretended miracles,  
 “ and divine apparitions, reduced the fierce  
 “ spirits of his subjects under the power of  
 “ superstition.”

The descriptions of the *religious pomps and processions* of the *Heathens* come so near to what we see on every *festival of the Virgin* or other *Romish Saint*, that one can hardly help thinking these *Popish ones* to be

[c] De Spectac. c. 8.

[d] Τα μὲν πολλὰ θυσίαις καὶ πομπαῖς καὶ χορείαις ἅμα σεμνότητι διαγωγὴν ἐπίχαριν καὶ φιλόπρεπον ἡδονὴν ἔχουσαι δημαγωγῶν καὶ τιθασσέων τὸ θυμοειδές, &c. Ἐδέλω τὴν διάνοισιν αὐτῶν ὑπὸ δεισιδαιμονίας, &c. Ibid. Plutar. in Numa. p. 16.

still



still regulated by the *old ceremonial* of *Pagan Rome*. At these solemnities the *chief magistrate* used frequently to assist in *robes of ceremony*; attended by the *Priests* in *surplices*, [e] with *wax candles* in their hands, carrying upon a *pageant* or *thensa* the *Images of their Gods*, dressed out in their best cloaths: these were usually followed by the *principal youth* of the place, in *white linen vestments* or *surplices*, *singing hymns* in honor of the *God*, whose *festival* they were celebrating; accompanied by *crouds of all sorts*, that were initiated in the *same religion*, all with *flambeaux* or *wax candles* in their hands. This is the account which *Apuleius*, and other authors give us of a *Pagan procession*; and I may appeal to all, who have been abroad, whether it might not pass quite as well for the description of a *Popish one*. *Monsieur Tournesfort*, in his travels through *Greece*, reflects upon the

[e] Antistites sacrorum candido linteamine——ad usque vestigia strictim injecti. Deum proferebant insignes exuvias, quorum primus lucernam præmicantem clarò porrigebat lumine, &c.——Eas amænus lectissimæ juventutis, veste niveâ prænitens sequebatur chorus, carmen venustum iterantes.——Magnus præterea sexûs utriusque numerus, lucernis, tædis, cereis, &c. Apul. ibid. Vid. Pausan, 2. 7.

*Greek*

*Greek Church*, for having retained and taken into their present worship many of the *old rites of Heathenism*, and particularly that of *carrying and dancing about the Images of the Saints in their processions to singing and musick* [f]: the reflection is full as applicable to his own, as it is to the *Greek Church*, and the practice itself so far from giving scandal in *Italy*, that the learned Publisher of the *Florentine Inscriptions* takes occasion to shew the *conformity* between them and the *Heathens*, from this very instance of carrying about the *pictures of their Saints*, as the *Pagans* did those of their *Gods*, in *their sacred processions* [g].

In one of these *processions*, made lately to *St. Peter's* in the time of *Lent*, I saw that *ridiculous penance* of the *flagellantes* or *self-whippers*, who march with *whips* in their hands, and lash themselves as they go along, on the bare back, till it is *all* covered with blood; in the same manner, as the *fanati-*

[f] Tournefort. Lit. 3. 44.

[g] Cui non abiudunt si (sacra cum profanis conferre fas est) pictæ tabulæ Sanctorum Imaginibus exornatæ, quæ, &c. Inscript. Antiq. Flor. p. 377.

*cal Priests of Bellona or the Syrian Goddess, as well as the votaries of Isis, used to slash and cut themselves of old, in order to please the Goddess, by the sacrifice of their own blood: which mad piece of discipline we find frequently mentioned, and as oft ridiculed by the antient writers.*

But they have another exercise of the same kind, and in the same season of Lent, which, under the notion of penance, is still a more absurd mockery of all religion: when on a certain day, appointed annually for this discipline, men of all conditions assemble themselves towards the evening, in one of the Churches of the City; where whips or lashes made of cords are provided, and distributed to every person present; and after they are all served, and a short office of devotion performed; the candles being put out, upon the warning of a little bell, the whole company begin presently to strip, and try the force of these whips on their own backs, for the space of near an hour: during all which time, the Church becomes, as it were, the proper Image of Hell: where nothing is heard but the noise of lashes and chains, mixed with the groans



of these self-tormentors; till satiated with their exercise, they are content to put on their cloaths, and the candles being lighted again, upon the tinkling of a second bell, they all appear in their proper dress.

*Seneca*, alluding to the very same effects of *fanaticism* in *Pagan Rome*, says; “ So great is the force of it on disordered minds, that they try to appease the Gods by such methods, as an enraged man would hardly take to revenge himself. But, if there be any Gods, who desire to be worshipped after this manner, they do not deserve to be worshipped at all: since the very worst of Tyrants, though they have sometimes torn and tortured people’s limbs, yet have never commanded men to torture themselves [*b*].” But there is no occasion to imagine, that all the blood, which seems to flow on these occasions, really comes from the backs of these Bigots: for it is probable,

[*b*] *Tantus est perturbatæ mentis furor, ut sic Dii placentur, quemadmodum ne homines quidem sæviunt.—Dii autem nullo debent coli genere, si & hoc volunt—tetrissimi Tyranni laceraverunt aliquorum membra; neminem sua lacerare jufferunt. Senec. Fragm. apud Lipsii Elect. l. 2. 18.*

that, like their *frantic Predecessors*, they may use some *craft*, as well as *zeal*, in this their fury; and I cannot but think, that there was a great deal of justice in that edict of the *Emperor Commodus*, with regard to these *Bellonarii*, or *whippers of antiquity*, though it is usually imputed to his cruelty, when he commanded, that they *should not be suffered to impose upon the spectators*, but be obliged to cut and slash themselves in good earnest [b].

If I had leisure to examine the *pretended miracles*, and *pious frauds* of the *Romish Church*, I should be able to trace them all from the same source of *Paganism*, and find, that the *Priests of new Rome* are not degenerated from *their predecessors*, in the art of forging these *holy impostures*; which, as *Livy* observes of *old Rome* [i], *were always multiplied in proportion to the credulity and disposition of the poor people to swallow them*.

[b] *Bellonæ servientes vere exsecrare brachium præcepit, studio crudelitatis. Lamprid. in Commod. 9.*

[i] *Quæ quo magis credebant simplices & religiosi homines, eo plura nuntiabantur. Liv. l. 24. 10.*

In the early times of the *republic*, in the war with the *Latins*, the *Gods Castor and Pollux* are said to have appeared on *white horses* in the *Roman army*, which by their assistance gained a complete victory: in memory of which, the *General Posthumius* vowed and built a *Temple publicly* to those *Deities*; and for a proof of the fact, there was shewn, we find, in *Cicero's* time, the *mark of the horse's hoofs* on a *rock at Regillum*, where they first appeared [k].

Now this *miracle*, with many others, that I could mention of the same kind [l], has, I dare say, as authentic an attestation, as any which the *Papists* can produce: the decree of a *Senate* to confirm it; a *Temple* erected in consequence of it; *visible marks* of the fact on the spot where it was transacted; and all this supported by the concurrent testimony of the *best authors of antiquity*; amongst whom *Dionysius* of *Ha-*

[k] Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 3. 5. ib. 2. 2. vid. de Div. 1. 34.

[l] Cic. Nat. D. 2. 2. Plutar. in vita P. Æmil. Val. Max. c. 8. 1. L. Flor. l. 1. 11. l. 2. 12.



*licarnassus* says [m], that there were subsisting in his time at *Rome* many evident proofs of it's reality, besides a *yearly festival*, with a *solemn sacrifice* and *procession* in memory of it: yet for all this, these stories were but the jest of men of sense, even in the times of *Heathenism* [n]; and seem so extravagant to us now, that we wonder, how there could ever be any so simple, as to believe them.

What better opinion then can we have, of all those of the same stamp in the *Popish Legends*, which they have plainly built on this foundation, and copied from this very original? Nor content with barely copying, they seldom fail to improve the old story, with some additional forgery and invention of their own. Thus in the present case, instead of *two persons* on *white horses*, they take care to introduce *three*; and not only on *white horses*, but at the head of *white armies*; as in an old history of the holy wars, written by a pretended eye-witness, and published by *Mabillon*, it is solemnly

[m] Dion. Halic. l. 6. p. 337. Edit. Hudson.

[n] Aut si hoc fieri potuisse dicis, doceas oportet quomodo, nec fabellas aniles proferas. Cic. *ibid.* 3. 5.

affirmed of St. George, *Demetrius*, and *Theodorus* [o]. They shew us too in several parts of *Italy*, the *marks of hands* and *feet on rocks and stones*, said to have been effected miraculously by the *apparition* of some *Saint* or *Angel* on the spot [p]: just as the *impression of Hercules's feet* was shewn of old on a stone in *Scythia* [q], exactly resembling the footsteps of a man. And they have also many *Churches* and pub-

[o] Tres itaque milites persequentes illos sedebant super albos equos——credenda est ista veritas, & nullo modo prohibenda——hoc vero firmatum est testimonio eorundem Turcorum——Isti vero fuerunt Christi milites Sanctus Demetrius, Sanctus Georgius & Sanctus Theodorus, quos Deus mandavit, &c.

Adjuvante eos Domino & visibiliter mittente eis in adiutorium sanctos suos Bellatores, videl. Mercurium multotiens, aliquando Georgium, necnon & interdum Theodorum; aliquando totos tres cum suis dealbatis exercitibus, videntibus non solum Christi militibus, sed etiam ipsis inimicis Paganis, &c. Vid. Bell. Sac. Hist. in Mabill. Iter. Ital. T. 1. Par. 2. p. 138, 155.

[p] Si conserva poi in questa Chiesa una pietra, sopra la quale aparendo l'Angelo in Castello, vi lasciò le piante de suoi piedi impresse, e d'un fanciullo paiono le vestigia. R. Mod. Gior. 5. Rion. di Campetalii. c. 1.

[q] Herodot. l. 4. p. 4. 251. Edit. Lond.

lic monuments [r] erected, in testimony of such miracles, viz. of *Saints and Angels fighting visibly for them in their battles*; which though always as ridiculous as that above-mentioned, are not yet supported by half so good evidence of their reality [s].

“ The religion of *Ceres of Enna* was  
 “ celebrated, as *Cicero* informs us, with a  
 “ wonderfull devotion, both in public and  
 “ private, through all *Sicily*: for her presence and divinity had been frequently  
 “ manifested to them by numerous prodigies, and many people had received  
 “ immediate help from her in their utmost distress. Her Image therefore in

[r] There is an Altar of marble in St. *Peter's*, one of the greatest pieces of modern sculpture, representing in figures as large as the life, the story of *Attila* King of the *Huns*, who in full march towards *Rome* with a victorious army, in order to pillage it, was frightened and driven back by the apparition of an Angel, in the time of Pope *Leo* the first.

The Castle and Church of St. *Angelo* have their title from the apparition of an Angel over the place, in the time of *Gregory* the Great. Rom. Moder. Giorn. 1. Rion. di Borgo 1.

[s] Divum Jacobum nationis Hispanicæ, qui armatus sæpe visus in sublime præire ac protegere acies Hispanorum, nobilesque iis victorias in sacris bellis conciliare. Boldonii Epigraph. l. 2. p. 349.



“ that Temple was held in such veneration,  
 “ tion, that whenever men beheld it, they  
 “ fancied themselves beholding either *Ceres*  
 “ herself, or} the figure of her at least not  
 “ made by human hands, but dropt down  
 “ to them from heaven [*t*].” Now if in  
 the place of *Ceres of Enna*, we should insert  
 into this relation, *our Lady of Loretto*,  
 or of *Impruneta*, or any other *miraculous*  
*Image in Italy*; the very same account  
 would suit as exactly with the history of  
 the modern Saint, as it is told by the present  
*Romans*, as it formerly did with that  
 of *Ceres*, as it is transmitted to us by the  
 Ancients. And what else indeed are all  
 their *miraculous Images*, which we see in  
 every great town, said to be made by *Angels*,  
 and sent to them from *heaven* [*u*],  
 but

[*t*] Mira quædam tota Sicilia privatim ac publice religio  
 est Cereris Ennensis. Etenim multa sæpe prodigia vim ejus  
 numenque declarant: multis sæpe in difficillimis rebus præ-  
 sens auxilium ejus oblatum est, &c. in Verr. 4. 49.

Alterum autem Ennæ (simulacrum Cereris) erat tale, ut  
 homines cum viderent, aut ipsam se videre Cererem, aut  
 effigiem Cereris, non humana manufactam, sed cælo delap-  
 sam arbitrentur. Ib. 5. 7.

[*u*] Sed quorsum hic Sancti Dominici imaginem, quæ  
 apud Surrianum in Calabria jugibus nunc miraculis præ-  
 fulget,

but mere copies of the ancient *Fables*, of the Διοπετὲς Ἀγαλμα, or *Image of Diana dropt from the clouds* [w]; or the *Palladium of Troy*, which, according to *old Authors* [x], was a wooden statue three cubits long, which *fell from heaven*.

In one of their *Churches* here, they shew a *picture of the Virgin*, which, as their *Writers* affirm [y], was brought down *from heaven* with great pomp, and after having hung a while with surprizing luster in the air, in the *sight of all the Clergy and people of Rome*, was delivered by *Angels* into the hands of *Pope John the First*, who marched out in solemn procession, in order to receive this *celestial pre-*

fulget, silentio obvolvimus? de Cælo quippe, ut pia traditio est, hæc primum anno 1530. delata validissimum adversus impios iconoclastas propugnaculum exhibet. Aring. Rom. Subter. l. 5. c. 5.

De imagine illa, quæ cum ab Angelis confecta fuerit, ἀχειρότυπον vocatur, nil nisi tritum succurrit. Montfauc. Diar. ibid. 137.

[w] Aët. Apost. c. xix. 35.

[x] Vid. Pitisci Lexic. Antiquitat.

[y] Vid. Rom. Modern. Giorn. 2. Rion. di Ripa, c. 43.

*sent.* And is not this exactly of a piece with the old *Pagan story* of *King Numa*, when in this same City, he issued from his palace, with *Priests and people* after him, and with *public prayer and solemn devotion* received the *ancile*, or *heavenly shield*, which in the presence of all the *people of Rome*, was sent down to him with much the same formality *from the clouds* [z]? And as that wise Prince for the security of his *heavenly present*, ordered several others to be made so exactly like it, that the *original* could not be distinguished [a]; so the *Romish Priests* have thence taken the hint, to form after each *celestial pattern*, a number of *copies*, so perfectly resembling each other, as to occasion endless squabbles among themselves about their several pretensions to the *divine original*.

[z] A media Cælum regione dehiscere cœpit :  
 Submisere oculos cum duce turba suos.  
 Ecce levi scutum versatum leniter aura  
 Decidit, a populo clamor ad astra venit, &c.  
 Ov. Fast. l. 3.

[a] Plura jubet fieri simili cælata figurâ ;  
 Error ut ante oculos insidiantis eat.  
 Ov. Fast. l. 3.

The



The *rod of Moses*, with which he performed his *miracles*, is still preserved, as they pretend, and shewn here with great devotion, in one of the principal *Churches*: and just so the *rod of Romulus*, with which he performed his *auguries*, was preserved by the *Priests*, as a *sacred relique* in old *Rome*, and kept with great reverence from being *touched or handled* by the people [b]: which *rod* too, like most of the *Popish reliques*, had the testimony of a *miracle* in proof of it's sanctity; for when the *Temple*, where it was kept, was burnt to the ground, it was found intire under the ashes, and untouched by the flames [c]: which same *miracle* has been borrowed and exactly copied by the *present Romans*, in many instances; particularly, in a *miraculous Image* of our *Saviour* in *St. John Lateran*; over which the flames, it seems, had no power, though

[b] Παραλαβόντες οἱ ἱερεῖς τὸ ξύλον ὥσπερ ἄλλό τι τῶν ἱερῶν ἄψαυσον ἐφύλαττον. Plutar. in Camil. 145. D.

[c] Possunt & illa miraculorum loco poni: Quod deusto sacratio saliorum, nihil in eo præter Lituum Romuli integrum repertum est. Valer. Max. c. 8. 10. It. Cic. de Divin. 1. 17. Plut. in Rom.

*the Church itself has been twice destroyed by fire [d].*

Nothing is more common among the *miracles of Popery*, than to hear of *Images*, that on certain occasions had *spoken*; or *shed tears*; or *sweat*; or *bled*: and do not we find the very same stories in all the *Heathen Writers*? Of which I could bring numberless examples from *old* as well as *new Rome*, from *Pagan* as well as *Popish legends*. *Rome*, as the Describer of it says [e], *abounds with these treasures, or speaking Images*: but he laments the negligence of their ancestors, in not recording, so particularly as they ought, the *very words and other circumstances of such conversations*. They shew us here an *Image of the Virgin*, which *reprimanded Gregory the Great*, for passing by her too carelessly: and, in *St. Paul's Church*, a crucifix, which spoke to

[d] E questa imagine non s'abbruciò, essendo la Chiesa stata abbruciata due volte, Rom. Moder. Gior. 6. Rion. de' Monti. 11.

[e] Non si puo negare, che per le grande abbondanza, che ha' Roma in simili tesori, non siano stati negligenti i nostri Maggiori, in darne buon conto a' posterì loro. Rom. Mod. R. di Monti. 21.

St.

St. Bridgith [f]. *Durantus* mentions another Madonna, which *spoke to the sexton*, in commendation of the piety of one of her votaries [g]. And did not the *Image of Fortune* do the same, or more in old Rome? Which, as Authors say, *spoke twice in praise of those matrons, who had dedicated a Temple to her* [b].

They have a Church here dedicated to *St. Mary the Weeper*, or to a *Madonna* famous for shedding tears [i]: They shew

[f] Vi è una Madonna detta di St. Gregorio, della quale si dice, che un giorno passando il detto Pontifice, & non salutandola, gli dicesse, &c. Ibid. Gior. 5. Rion. di Campetalli.

Ad sanctum Paulum, ubi vidimus ligneam Crucifixi Imaginem, quem sancta Brigida sibi loquentem audiisse perhibetur. Mabill. D. Italic. p. 133.

[g] Imaginem Sanctæ Mariæ custodem Ecclesiæ allocutam & Alexii singularem pietatem commendasse. Durant. de Rit. l. 1. c. 5.

[b] Fortunæ item muliebris simulacrum, quod est in via Latina, non semel, sed bis locutum constitit, his pæne verbis, bene me matronæ vidistis, riteque dedicastis. Valer. Max. 1. 8.

[i] S. Maria del Pianto. Rom. Mod. Gior. 3. Rion. della Regosa 5.



an *Image* too of *our Saviour*, which for some time before the *Sacking of Rome* wept so heartily, that the good fathers of the *Monastery* were all employed in wiping its face with cotton [k]. And was not the case just the same among their *ancestors*, when on the approach of some public calamity, the *statue of Apollo*, as *Livy* tells us, wept for three days and nights successively [l]? They have another *Church* built in honor of an *Image*, which bled very plentifully, from a blow given to it by a blasphemer [m]. And were not the *old Idols* too as full of blood, when, as *Livy* relates, all the *Images in the temple of Juno* were seen to sweat with drops of it [n]?

[k] Dicono, ch'avanti il sacco di Roma pianse piu volte, e li Padri ci venissero ad asciugare le lagrime con Bombace. Ib. Gior. 6. Rio de Mon. 31.

[l] Apollo triduum & tres noctes lacrymavit. Liv. l. 43. 13.

[m] Comminciarono a tirarle de' sassi nel viso, e ne uscì sangue, del quale si vedono infin' hora i segni, &c. Rom. Mod. Gior. 3. Rio. di Ponte 17.

[n] Signa ad Junonis sospitæ sudore manavere. Liv. 23. 31.  
Ad Lucum Feroniæ sanguine fudarunt. Ib. 27. 4.

All which *prodigies*, as well *modern* as *antient*, are derived from the same source, *viz.* the *contrivance of priests or governors*, in order to draw some gain or advantage out of the poor people, whom they thus impose upon.

*Xenophon*, though himself much addicted to *superstition*, speaking of the *Prodigies*, which preceded the battle of *Leuctra*, and portended victory to the *Thebans*, tells us, that *some people looked upon them all as forged and contrived by the magistrates* [o], the better to animate and encourage the multitude : and as the *originals* themselves were but *impostures*, it is no wonder, that the *copies* of them appear such *gross and bungling forgeries*.

I have observed a story in *Herodotus* [p], not unlike the account, which is given of the *famed travels of the house of Loretto*; of *certain sacred mystical things*, that *travelled about from country to country*, and

[o] Οἱ μὲν δὴ τινες λέγουσιν ὡς ταῦτα πάντα τεχνάσματα τῶν προεστηκότων. *Xenoph. Ellen.* l. 6.

[p] *Herodot.* l. 4. p. 235. Edit. Lond.

after many removals and journeys, settled at last for good and all, in *Delus*. But this, *imposture* of the *holy house* might be suggested rather, as Mr. *Addison* has observed [q], by the extraordinary veneration paid in old *Rome* to the cottage of it's founder *Romulus*: which was held sacred by the people, and repaired with great care from time to time, with the same kind of materials, so as to be kept up in the same form, in which it was originally built [r]. It was turned also, I find, like this other cottage of our *Lady*, into a temple, and had divine service performed in it, till it happened to be burnt down by the fire of a sacrifice in the time of *Augustus* [s]: but what makes the similitude still more remarkable is, that this pretended cottage of *Romulus* was shewn on the *Capitoline Hill* [t]; whereas it is

[q] *Addison's Travels from Pesaro to Rome.*

[r] *Dion. Halicar. l. 1.*

[s] Σκηνή ἡ τῆς Ρωμύλου ἐξ ἐργασίας τινὸς ἣν οἱ πολίται  
αὐτῇ ἐπιποιήκεσαν, ἐκαύσθη. *Dio. l. 48. p. 437.*

[t] *Per Romuli casam, perque veteris Capitolii humilia  
testa juro. Val. Max. l. 4. c. 11.*

Item in Capitolio commonefacere potest, & significare  
mores vetustatis Romuli casa in Arce sacrorum, *Vitruv. l. 2.  
c. 1. Vid. etiam Macrob. Sat. 1. 15. Virg. Æn. 8. 65.*



certain, that *Romulus* himself lived on *Mount Palatin* [u] : so that if it had really been the *house of Romulus*, it must needs, like the *holy house of Loretto*, have taken a leap in the air, and suffered a *miraculous translation*, though not from so great a distance, yet from *one hill* at least to the *other*.

But if we follow their own writers, it is not the *holy house of Loretto*, but the *homely cradle of our Saviour*, that we should compare rather with the *little house of Romulus* : which cradle is now shewn in *St. Mary the Great*, and on *Christmas-day* exposed on the high altar to the adoration of the people ; being held in the same veneration by *present Rome*, as the *humble cottage of it's founder* had been by it's *old inhabitants*. *Rome*, says *Baronius* [x], “ Is

[u] Περί τὴν εἰς τὸν ἰσπόμενον τὸν μέγαν ἐκ παλαιῆς κατέβασιν. Plutarch. in Rom. p. 30.

Ρωμύλῳ μὲν τὸ παλάτιον κατέχων, Τάτιῳ δὲ τὸ Καπιτώλιον. Dion. Hal. l. 2. p. 110. Ed. Hudf.

[x] Porro in Christi natalis nobile monumentum ex ligno confectum nullâque argenti vel auri cælaturâ confectum, Roma possidet, eoque multò feliciùs illustratur quàm Tugurio Romuli, &c. Vid. Baron. An. 1. Christi 5. It. Aring. Rom. Subt. l. 6. 1.

“ now

“ now in possession of that noble monument  
 “ of Christ’s Nativity, made only of wood,  
 “ without any ornament of silver or gold,  
 “ and is made more happily illustrious by  
 “ it, than it was of old by the cottage of  
 “ *Romulus*; which, though built only with  
 “ mud and straw, our ancestors preserved  
 “ with great care for many ages.”

The *melting of St. Januarius’s Blood at Naples*, whenever it is brought to his *head*, which is done with great solemnity on the day of his *festival* [y], whilst at all other times it continues dried and congealed in a glass phyal, is one of the *standing* and most *authentic miracles of Italy*. Yet Mr. *Addison*, who twice saw it performed, assures us, that instead of appearing to be a *real miracle*, he thought it *one of the most bungling tricks, that he had ever seen* [z].

[y] De sancti Januarii cruore mirum quiddam narratur in Breviario Romano—quod ejus sanguis, qui in ampulla vitrea concretus asservatur, cum in conspectu capitis ponitur, admirandum in modum colliquifera videtur. Aringh. Rom. Subter. l. i. 16.

[z] Addison’s Trav. at Naples.

*Mabillon’s*

*Mabillon's* account of the fact seems to solve it very naturally, without the help of a *miracle* [a] : for during the time that a *Mass* or two are celebrated in the Church, the other priests are tampering with this *phyal* of blood, which is suspended all the while in such a situation, that as soon as any part of it begins to melt by the heat of their hands, or other management, it drops of course into the lower side of the glass which is empty; upon the first discovery of which, the *miracle* is proclaimed aloud, to the great joy and edification of the people.

But by what way soever it be effected, it is plainly nothing else, but the copy of an old cheat of the same kind, transacted near the same place, which *Horace* makes himself merry with in his journey to *Brundisium*; telling us, how the priests would have imposed upon him and his friends, at a town called *Gnatia*, by persuading them, that the *Frankincense* in the temple used to

[a] Ad præsentiam capitis colliquifieri videtur, ampullâ eâ parte, qua sanguis, naturaliter in subjectam ampullæ partem cadere debet, suspensâ; missa interim una duæve, cum sanguis decadat, celebrantur. *Mabill. Iter. Ital.* p. 106.



*dissolve and melt miraculously of itself, without the help of fire [b].*

In the *Cathedral Church of Ravenna*, I saw in *Mosaic Work* the pictures of those *Archbishops* of the place, who, as all their historians affirm [c], were chosen for several ages successively by the special designation of the *Holy Ghost*, who, in a full assembly of the Clergy and People, used to descend visibly on the *person elect*, in the shape of a *Dove*. If the fact of such a descent be true, it will easily be accounted for by a passage in *Aulus Gellius*, (whence the hint was probably taken) who tells us of *Archytas* the *Philosopher* and *Mathematician*, that he formed a *Pigeon of wood so artificially, as to make it fly by the power of Mechanism, just as he directed it [d]*. And we find  
from

[b] Hor. Sat. 1. 5. v. 98.

[c] Quis enim nescit, quod sacrae testantur historiae, tunc temporis cum Fabianus in summum Pontificem salutatus est, Columbam caelitibus advenisse, ejusque capiti insidendo suffragium detulisse? &c. Hoc idem in complurium Ravennatum Episcoporum electionibus solenne extitit, quorum memoriam Rubeus recolit. Hist. Raven. &c. Aring. Rom. Subt. 1. 6. c. 48.

[d] Plerique nobilium Graecorum affirmatissime scripserunt, simulachrum Columbae e ligno ab Archyta ratione quadam, disciplinaque

from *Strada*, that many tricks of this kind were actually contrived for the diversion of *Charles the Fifth* in his Monastery, by one *Turrianus*, who made *little birds fly out of the room, and back again*, by his great skill in *Machinery* [e].

It would be endless to run through all the *Popish Miracles*, which are evidently forged, or copied from the *originals of Paganism*; since there is scarce a *Prodigy* in the *old Historians*, or a *Fable* in the *old Poets*, but what is transcribed into *their Legends*, and swallowed by their silly Bigots, as certain and undoubted facts.

The story of *Arion the Musician*, riding triumphant with his harp on the *back of a Dolphin*, that took him up when *thrown over-board at Sea*, is, one would think, too grossly fabulous, to be applied to any purpose of *Christian Superstition*: Yet our *present Romans* so far surpass the *old* in *Fable* and *Imposture*, that out of this *single story*

disciplinaque mechanica factum volasse: Ita erat libramentis suspensum, &c. A. Gell. Noct. Att. l. 10. 12.

[e] Vid. Gronovii Not. in Gell. Ibid.

they have coined *many* of the *same stamp*, viz. of *Dolphins taking up and bringing ashore* with great pomp several of *their Saints*, both dead and alive, who had been *thrown into the Sea by Infidels*, either to drown, or to deprive them of burial [ *f* ].

The *fable of the Harpies*, those *furies* or *winged monsters*, who were so troublesome to *Æneas* and his *Companions* [ *g* ], seems to be copied in the very *first Church* within the walls of *Rome*, close to the gate of the *people*, as it is called, by which we enter it from the north : where there is an *Altar* with a *public Inscription* [ *b* ], signifying,

[ *f* ] Quos Judex submersos in mare necavit ; sed Delphinorum obsequio Corpora eorum ad littus delata sunt : Sed de Obsequio Delphinorum martyribus impenso plura infra suo loco. Aringh. Rom. Subterr. l. i. c. 9, 10.

[ *g* ] Virg. *Æn.* 3. 211.

[ *b* ] Altare à Paschali Papa II. divino afflatu  
ritu solemniori hoc loco erectum  
quo dæmones  
proceros nucis arbori insidentes  
transeuntem hinc populum dire insultantes  
confestim expulit,  
Urbani VIII. pont. max. auctoritate  
excelsiorem in locum quem conspiciis  
translatum fuit.

An. Dom. MDCXXVII.



that it was built by *Pope Paschal the Second*, by *divine Inspiration*, in order to drive away a nest of huge *dæmons* or *monsters*, who used to perch upon a tree in that very place, and terribly insult all who entered the city.

The *Pöpish Writers* themselves are forced to allow, that many both of *their reliques* and *their miracles* have been forged by the craft of *Priests*, for the sake of money and lucre. *Durantus*, a zealous defender of *all their ceremonies*, gives several instances of the former; particularly of *the bones of a common thief*, which had for some time been honored with an altar, and worshipped under the title of a Saint [i]. And for the latter; *Lyra*, in his *Comment on Bel and the Dragon*, observes, that sometimes also in the Church, very great cheats are put upon the people, by false miracles, contrived, or countenanced at least, by their priests for some gain and temporal advantage [k]. And

[i] S. Martinus Altare, quod in honorem Martyris exstructum fuerat, cum ossa & reliquias cujusdam latronis esse deprehendisset, submoveri jussit. Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 25.

[k] Aliquando fit in Ecclesia maxima deceptio populi in miraculis fictis à sacerdotibus, vel eis adhærentibus propter lucrum temporale, &c. Vid. Nic. Lyr. in Dan. c. 14.

*what their own authors confess of some of their miracles, we may venture, without any breach of charity, to believe of them all; nay, we cannot indeed believe any thing else without impiety; and without supposing God to concur in an extraordinary manner, to the establishment of fraud, error, and superstition in the world.*

The *refuge* or *protection* given to all, who fly to the *Church* for shelter, is a *privilege* directly transferred from the *heathen temples* to the *Popish Churches*; and has been practised in *Rome*, from the time of its *founder Romulus*; who in imitation of the *Cities of Greece*, opened an *Asylum* or *Sanctuary* to *fugitives* of all Nations [1].

But we may observe the great moderation of *Pagan*, above that of *Popish Rome*, in regard to this custom; for I do not remember that there was ever more than *one Asylum* in the times of the *Republic*; whereas there are now *some hundreds* in the same city; and when

[1]

Romulus, ut faxo lucum circumdedit alto

Quilibet huc, inquit, confuge tutus eris.

Ov. Fast. 3.

that

that single one (which was opened rather for the increase of it's inhabitants, than the protection of criminals) was found in the end to give too great encouragement to mischief and licentiousness; they *inclosed it round in such a manner, as to hinder all access to it* [m]: whereas the present *Popish Sanctuaries* stand perpetually open, not to receive strangers, but to shelter villains; so that it may literally be said of these, what our Saviour said of the Jewish temple, that *they have turned the house of Prayer into a Den of Thieves* [n].

In the *early ages of Christianity* there were many limitations put upon the use of this privilege by *Emperors and councils*; and the greater crimes of *murder, adultery, theft, &c.* were especially excepted from the benefit of it [o]: but now they scruple not to receive to *sanctuary*, even the most

[m] Οὕτω γὰρ περιφράχθη ὥστε μηδὲν εἶναι τὸ παράπαν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς αὐτὸ δυνήσθαι. Dio. l. 47. p. 385.

[n] Matth. xxi. 13.

[o] Neque Homicidis, neque Adulteris, neque virginum raptoribus, &c. terminorum custodies cautelam; sed etiam inde extrahes, & supplicium eis inferes. Justin. Novel. 17. c. 7.



detestable crimes ; and it is owing without doubt to this policy of *holy Church*, that murders are so common with them in *Italy* on slight provocations ; whilst there is a *Church* always at hand and always open, to secure offenders from legal punishment ; several of whom have been shewn to me in different places, walking about at their ease and in full security within the bounds of their *sanctuary*.

In their very *Priesthood* they have contrived, one would think, to keep up as near a resemblance, as they could, to that of *Pagan Rome* : and the *sovereign Pontif*, instead of deriving his succession from *St. Peter*, (who if ever he was at *Rome*, did not reside there at least in any worldly pomp or splendor) may with more reason, and a much better plea, stile himself the *Successor* of the [p] *Pontifex Maximus*, or chief Priest

[p] Multa divinitus, Pontifices, a majoribus nostris inventa, nihil præclarius, quam quod vos eisdem, & religionibus Deorum Immortalium & summæ Reipublicæ præesse voluerunt. Cic. pro Dom. 1.

Maximus Pontifex dicitur, quod maximus rerum, quæ ad sacra & religiones pertinent, judex sit, vindexque contumaciæ privatorum, Magistratuumque Fest. l. 11. in voce Max.

Quod

*Priest of old Rome* ; whose *authority* and *dignity* was the greatest in the *Republic* ; and who was looked upon as the *arbiter or judge of all things*, civil as well as sacred, human as well as divine : whose power, established almost with the foundation of the City, “ was an omen, (says *Polydore Virgil*)  
 “ and sure presage of that priestly Majesty,  
 “ by which *Rome* was once again to reign  
 “ as universally, as it had done before by  
 “ the force of it's arms [q].”

But of all the *soverein Pontifs of Pagan Rome*, it is very remarkable, that *Caligula* was the first, who ever offered *his foot to be kissed* by any, who approached him : which raised a general indignation through the City, to see themselves reduced to suffer so great an indignity. Those, who endeavoured to excuse it, said ; that it was not

Quod Judex atque Arbiter habetur rerum divinarum, humanarumque. Id. in Ordo Sacerdotum.

T. Coruncanium Pontificatu maximo ad principale extulere fastigium. Vell. Pater. l. 2. 128.

[q] Certum portentum quo est significatum, Urbem Romanam postremo perinde Pontificia Majestate, qua nunc late patet, gentibus moderaturam, atque olim potentia imperasset. Pol. Vir. In. rer. l. 4. 14.

done

done out of insolence, but vanity; and for the sake of shewing *his golden slipper, set with jewels*. *Seneca* declames upon it, in his usual manner, as the last affront to liberty; and the introduction of *a Persian slavery into the manners of Rome* [r]. Yet this servile act, unworthy either to be imposed or complied with by man, is now the standing ceremonial of *Christian Rome*, and a necessary condition of access to *the reigning Popes*; though derived from no better origin, than the frantic pride of a brutal *Pagan Tyrant*.

The great variety of their *religious orders and societies of Priests* seems to have been formed upon the plan of the *old colleges or fraternities of the Augurs, Pontifices, Salii, Fratres Arvales, &c.* The *vestal Virgins* might furnish the hint for the *foundation of Nunneries*: and I have observed something very like to the *rules and austerities of the monastic life*, in the character and manner of

[r] Absoluto & gratias agenti porrexit osculandum finistrum pedem—qui excusant, negant id insolentiae causa factum; aiunt Socculum auratum, imo aureum, margaritis distinctum ostendere eum voluisse—natus in hoc, ut mores civitatis Persica servitute mutaret, &c. Senec. de Benef. l. 2. 12.



several *Priests* of the *Heathens*, who used to live by themselves, retired from the world, near to the *Temple* or *Oracle* of the *Deity*, to whose particular service they were devoted; as the *Selli*, the *Priests* of *Dodonæan Jove*, a self-mortifying race [s].

ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοὶ

Σοὶ ναίῃσ' ὑποφῆται ἀνιπλόποδες χαμαιεῦναι.

Il. 17. 234.

Whose groves the *Selli*, race austere, surround;

Their feet unwash'd, their slumbers on the Ground,

Mr. Pope.

But above all, in the old descriptions of the *lazy mendicant Priests* among the *Hea-*

[s] Τὸ τῶν ἱερέων γένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων χωρὶς ἀφορισμένον.  
Plato in *Timæo*. p. 1044.

From the character of these *Selli*, or as others call them *Elli*, the Monks of the *Pagan* World; seated in the fruitful soil of *Dodona*; abounding, as *Hesiod* describes it, with every thing, that could make life easy and happy; and whether no man ever approached them without an offering in his hands, we may learn, whence their successors of modern times have derived that peculiar skill or prescriptive right, of choosing the richest part of every country for the place of their settlement. Vid. *Sophoc. Trachin.* p. 340. v. 1175. Edit. Turneb. & Schol. Triclin.

*thens*, who used to travel [t] from *house to house*, with *sacks on their backs*; and, from an opinion of their sanctity, raise large contributions of *money, bread, wine, and all kind of victuals*, for the support of their *fraternity*, we see the very picture of the *begging Friers*; who are always about the streets in the *same habit*, and on the *same errand*, and never fail to carry home with them a *good sack full of provisions* for the use of their *convent*.

Cicero, in his *book of laws*, restrains this practice of *begging*, or *gathering alms*, to *one particular order of Priests*, and that only on *certain days*; because, as he says [u], *it propagates superstition, and impoverishes families*. Which, by the way, may let us see the policy of the *Church of Rome*, in the great care, that they have taken to *multiply their begging orders*.

[t] *Stipes æreas immo vero & argenteas multis certatim offerentibus finu recipere patulo; nec non & vini cadum & lactis & caseos avidis animis corradentes & in sacculos huic quæstui de industria præparatos farcientes, &c. Apuleius Metam. l. 8 p. 262.*

[u] *Stipem sustulimus, nisi eam quam ad paucos dies propriam Idææ matris excepimus: Implet enim superstitione animos, exhaurit domos. Cic. de Legib. l. 2. 9, 16.*

I could

I could easily carry on this parallel, through many more instances of the *Pagan* and *Popish ceremonies*, if I had not already said enough, to shew from what spring all that superstition flows, which we so justly charge them with, and how vain an attempt it must be, to justify by the principles of *Christianity*, a *worship* formed upon the plan, and after the very pattern of pure *Heathenism*. I shall not trouble myself with inquiring at what time, and in what manner these several corruptions were introduced into the *Church*: whether they were contrived by the *intrigues and avarice of Priests*, who found their advantage in reviving and propagating *impostures*, which had been of old so profitable to *their predecessors*: or whether the *genius of Rome* was so strongly turned to *fanaticism* and *superstition*, that they were forced, in condescension to the humor of the people, to dress up their *new religion* to the modes and fopperies of the *old*. This, I know, is the *principle*, by which their *own Writers* defend themselves, as oft as they are attacked on this head.

*A ringbus,*



*Aringbus*, in his account of *subterraneous Rome*, acknowledges this conformity between the *Pagan* and *Popish* rites, and defends the admission of the *ceremonies* of *Heathenism* into the *service* of the *Church*, by the authority of their *wisest Popes* and *Governors* [w], “ who found it necessary, “ *he says*, in the conversion of the *Gentiles*, “ to dissemble and wink at many things, “ and yield to the times ; and not to use “ force against customs, which the people “ were so obstinately fond of ; nor to think “ of extirpating at once every thing, that “ had the appearance of profane ; but to “ supersede in some measure the obligation “ of the sacred laws ; till these converts, “ convinced by degrees, and informed of “ the whole truth, by the suggestions of

[w] Ac maximi subinde Pontifices quamplurima prima quidem facie dissimulanda duxere, optimum videlicet rati temporis deferendum esse ; suadebant quippe sibi, haud ullam adversus gentilitios ritus vim, utpote qui mordicus a fidelibus retinebantur, adhibendam esse ; neque ullatenus enitendum, ut quicquid profanos saperet mores, omnino tolleretur, quinimo quam maxima utendum lenitate, sacrarumque legum ex parte intermittendum imperium arbitrabantur, &c. Vid. *Aring. Rom. Subter. Tom. 1. l. 1. c. 21.*

“ the

“ the Holy Spirit, should be content to  
 “ submit in earnest to the Yoke of *Christ*.”

It is by the same principles, that the *Jesuits* defend the *concessions*, which they make at this day to their *Profelytes* in *China*; who, where pure Christianity will not go down, never scruple to compound the matter between *Jesus* and *Confucius*; and prudently allow, what the *stiff old Prophets* so impolitically condemned, a *partnership between God and Baal*: of which though they have often been accused at the *Court of Rome*, yet I have never heard, that their conduct has been censured. But this kind of reasoning, how plausible soever it may be, with regard to the first ages of Christianity, or to nations just converted from *Paganism*, is so far from excusing the present *Gentilism* of the *Church of Rome*, that it is a direct condemnation of it; since the necessity alledged for the practice, if ever it had any real force, has not, at least for many ages past, at all subsisted: and their toleration of such practices, however usefull at first for reconciling *Heathens* to *Christianity*, seems now to be the readiest way, to drive *Christians* back again to *Heathenism*.

But

But it is high time for me to conclude, being persuaded, if I do not flatter myself too much, that I have sufficiently made good, what I first undertook to prove ; an *exact Conformity*, or *Uniformity* rather of *Worship*, between *Popery* and *Paganism* : for since, as I have shewn above, we see the *present people of Rome* worshipping in the *same Temples* ; at the *same Altars* ; sometimes the *same Images* ; and always with the *same Ceremonies*, as the *old Romans* ; they must have more *charity*, as well as *skill in distinguishing*, than I pretend to have, who can absolve them from the *same superstition* and *idolatry*, of which we condemn their *Pagan Ancestors*.

POST-



## P O S T - S C R I P T .

AFTER I had sent these Papers to the Press, I happened to meet with a Paragraph, in *Mr. Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses*, which obliges me to detain the reader a little longer, in order to obviate the prejudices, which the authority of so celebrated a writer may probably inject to the disadvantage of my argument; which, though it has been maintained, as he observes, by *many able writers*, he has taken occasion to condemn, as an *utter mistake, and a misapplication of their time and learning, in the pursuit of a false principle.*

The paragraph runs thus ;

“ There is nothing obstructs our discoveries in antiquity, (as far as relates to the knowledge of mankind) so much as that false, though undisputed principle, that the general customs of men (in which a common likeness connects, as in a chain, the manners of it's inhabitants, quite round the globe) are all, whether civil or religious, traductive from

Q

“ one

“ one another. Whereas in truth, the  
 “ original of this similitude, is the voice  
 “ of one common nature, improved by  
 “ reason, or debased by superstition, speak-  
 “ ing to all it's tribes of individuals. But  
 “ it is no wonder men have been misled  
 “ by this false principle. For when a  
 “ custom, whose meaning lies not very ob-  
 “ vious, requires some account to be given  
 “ of it's original, it is much easier, to tell  
 “ us, that this people derived it from that,  
 “ than rightly to explain to us, what com-  
 “ mon principle of reason or superstition  
 “ gave birth to it, in both. How many  
 “ able Writers have employed their time  
 “ and learning to prove *Christian Rome* to  
 “ have borrowed their superstitions from  
 “ the *Pagan City*? They have indeed  
 “ shewn an exact and surprizing likeness  
 “ in a great variety of instances. But the  
 “ conclusion from thence, that, therefore,  
 “ the Catholic borrowed from the Hea-  
 “ then, as plausible, as it seems, is, I  
 “ think, *utterly mistaken*. To offer at  
 “ present only this plain reason, the rise of  
 “ the superstitious customs in question  
 “ were many ages later than the conver-  
 “ sion of that Imperial City to the Chri-  
 “ stian

“ stian faith: consequently, at the time of  
 “ their introduction, there were no *Pagan*  
 “ prejudices that required such a compli-  
 “ ance from the ruling Clergy. For this,  
 “ and other reasons, therefore, I am ra-  
 “ ther induced to believe, that the very  
 “ same spirit of superstition, operating in  
 “ equal circumstances, made both *Papists*  
 “ and *Pagans* truly originals, &c. [a]”

I am at a loss to conceive, what could  
 move my learned friend, to pass so severe a  
 censure upon an argument, which has hi-  
 therto been espoused by all Protestants;  
 admitted by many Papists; and evaded, ra-  
 ther than contradicted, by any. But what-  
 ever was his motive, which, I persuade  
 myself, was no unfriendly one, he will  
 certainly pardon me, if pursuing the full  
 conviction of my mind, I attempt to de-  
 fend an established principle, confirmed by  
 strong and numerous facts, against an opinion  
 wholly new and strange to me; and which,  
 if it can be supposed to have any force,  
 overthrows the whole credit and use of my  
 present work.

[a] Div. Legation. Vol. II. par. 1. p. 355.



To procede therefore to the consideration of his reasoning. He allows, that the writers, who have undertaken, *to deduce the rites of Popery from Paganism, have shewn an exact and surprizing likeness between them, in a great variety of instances.* This, one would think, is allowing every thing, that the cause demands : it is every thing, I dare say, that those writers desire. But this question, according to his notion, is not to be decided by facts, but by a principle of a different kind ; *a superior knowledge of human nature ;* which would teach us, that, notwithstanding all *that exact and surprizing likeness, the Papists are as truly originals as the Pagans ; and borrowed nothing at all in reality from their Heathen Ancestors.*—He offers *one plain reason, in the support of this assertion ; “ that the*  
*“ rise of the superstitious customs in questi-*  
*“ on were many ages later, than the conver-*  
*“ sion of Rome to the Christian faith ; and*  
*“ consequently, at the time of their first in-*  
*“ troduction, there were no Pagan preju-*  
*“ dices, that required such a compliance*  
*“ from the ruling Clergy.”* But this reason is so far from being a *plain one*, that till it  
be

be more precisely stated, it will hardly pass for any reason at all. It consists, we see, of an *historical fact*; and of a *consequence*, deduced from it: but till the *Æra of that fact* be settled, or *the number of ages* determined, by which *the Introduction of those ceremonies* was later than *the conversion of Rome*, it is not possible for us to judge of the consequence, which he draws from it; or to know, whether there were *any Pagan prejudices* subsisting at that time or not; on which the whole force of his reason depends.

To set this argument therefore in it's proper light, let us take a summary view of *the Christian religion in Rome*, from the reign of *Constantine the Great*, the known æra of it's establishment in that Imperial City.

From this *Æra* then, according to the accounts of all writers, though Christianity became the public and established religion of the Government, yet it was forced to sustain a perpetual struggle for many ages, against the obstinate efforts of *Paganism*; which was openly espoused by some

of the Emperors ; publicly tolerated, and privately favored by others ; and connived at in some degree by all.

Within thirty years after *Constantine*, the *Apostate Julian* intirely restored it ; abrogated all the laws, which had been made against it ; and prohibited the Christians to *teach or propagate the Gospel* [b]. The three Emperors, who next succeeded ; *Jovian*, *Valentinian*, *Valens* ; though they were Christians by profession, were yet wholly *indifferent and neutral between the two religions* ; granting an equal indulgence and toleration to them both : and *Gratian*, the fourth, though a sincere believer, did not think fit to annul, what *Julian* had restored [c]. He was the first however, who

[b] Petunt etiam, ut illis privilegia deferas, qui loquendi & docendi nostris communem usum, Juliani lege proxima denegarunt.—

Ambros. Adv. Symmach. lib. 1. ad Valentinianum.

[c] *Ammianus Marcellinus*, who lived in that very age, gives this character of the Emperor *Valentinian* ; Postremò hoc moderamine principatus inclaruit ; quod inter religionum diversitates medius stetit ; nec quenquam inquietavit ; neque ut hoc coleretur imperavit, aut illud. Nec interdictis minacibus subjectorum cervicem ad id, quod ipse coluit, inclinabat ;



who refused the *title and habit of the Pontifex Maximus*; as giving a kind of sanction to the old Idolatry. But this affront provoked *the Pagan Priesthood* so highly, that one of them is recorded to have said; *since the Emperor refuses to be our Pontifex, we will very shortly take care, that the Pontifex shall be Maximus*; which they soon after made good, by the murder of *Gratian*, and the advancement of *Maximus* to the throne [d].

In the following reign of *Theodosius*, whose laws were generally severe upon *the Pagans*, *Symmachus*, the Governor of Rome, presented a petition or memorial, in the strongest terms, and in the name of the Senate and people of Rome, to *Valentinian the Younger*; *Theodosius's* partner in

inclinabat; sed intemeratas reliquit has partes, ut reperit. lib. 30. c. 9.

*Symmachus*, in his memorial to *Valentinian the II<sup>d</sup>*. speaking with a reference to the five Emperors, just named, says; numerentur Principes utriusque Sectæ, utriusque Sententiæ: proximus eorum cæremonias patrum coluit, recentior non removit. *Symmach. Epist. l. x. 54.*

[d] Vid. Jac. Gothofred. De Statu Paganor. sub Christ. Imperatorib. Pref.

the Empire ; for leave, *to replace the Altar of Victory in the Senate House*, whence it had been removed by *Gratian* ; and to restore their ancient privileges and revenues *to the Vestal Virgins* [e]. This memorial was answered by *St. Ambrose* ; who, in a Letter upon it to the Emperor, observes ; *that when the petitioners had so many Temples and Altars open to them in all the streets of Rome, and particularly an Altar of Victory, where they might freely offer their Sacrifices, it seemed to be a mere insult on Christianity, to demand still one Altar more ; and especially in the Senate House, where the greater part were then Christians* [f]. Yet it appears from some hints in another letter, that this *majority of Christians* durst not venture to oppose the petition, but were content to withdraw themselves onely, that they might not be said to have voted

[e] Vid. Symmach. Epist. ibid.

[f] Hujus aram strui in Urbis Romæ Curia petunt ; hoc est, quo plures conveniunt *Christiani*. Omnibus in Templis aræ ; ara etiam in Templo victoriarum ; quoniam numero delectantur, Sacrificia sua ubique concelebrant. Quid est nisi insultare fidei, unius aræ Sacrificium vendicare ? — Non illis satis sunt lavacra, non porticus, non plateæ occupatæ simulacris. — Ambros. adv. Symmach. lib. 2. ad Valentin.

for

for it [ g ]. The petition was rejected by *Valentinian*, against the advice of all his Council ; but was granted presently after by the *Usurper Eugenius*, who murdered and succeeded him.

*Theodosius the II<sup>d</sup>*, pursuing the maxims of his Father, published a law, to punish all those, *who were caught in the act of sacrificing to Idols, with banishment and confiscation of goods* : and when this was not sufficient to restrain them, he made the punishment *capital, and ordered their Temples to be demolished*. Yet he prohibited the Christians at the same time by another law, from injuring either *their persons or goods, on the account of their religion, as long as they behaved themselves quietly, and with due respect to the laws* [ b ].

During

[ g ] Ibid. lib. i.

[ b ] Sed hoc Christianis, qui vel verè sunt, vel esse dicuntur, specialiter demandamus, ut Judæis ac Paganis in quiete degentibus, —non audeant manus inferre religionis auctoritate abusi, &c.

Vid. Jac. Gothofred. de Statu Paganor. leg. 24. A. D. 423.

N. B. This law, which was published above a Century after the establishment of Christianity, is addressed, in very peculiar terms, to *all Christians, whether real or nominal* ;



During this period therefore, which includes a *full century* from the *conversion of Rome*, in which the *Christians and Pagans* lived promiscuously in every City of the Empire ; enjoying, for the greatest part, not onely the free exercise of their several religions, but an equal share of the honors and magistracies of the State, it is evident, as well from the nature of the thing, as from the facts above recited, that there were many *strong prejudices in favor of Paganism*, actually subsisting in all ranks of men ; which an ambitious and temporizing Clergy would naturally apply to the advantage of their ease, their profit, or their power : so that, if any of the ceremonies in question were introduced into the Church within this period, their *Pagan*

*minimal ; whether they were truly so, or passed onely for such—* Which shews us in the first place, from what source a great part of *those pagan prejudices*, that infected the discipline of the Church, would naturally arise ; *viz.* from the numbers of the pretended converts, who were *Pagans* still in their hearts, and conformed onely through fear, or flattery to the reigning powers : and 2dly ; that these false Christians used to cover their hypocrisy by the mask of an extraordinary zeal, and were the most forward to insult and persecute both the *Jews* and the *Pagans*.

*origin*

*origin* cannot be disputed, and *Mr. Warburton*, I am persuaded, according to his own reasoning, will allow *the mistake* to lie on his side.

Let us inquire then in the next place, what light the monuments of those times will afford concerning *the rise of these ceremonies*. But as it is of little moment to the public, to know the exact time of their introduction, so I will carry the reader no farther into this search, than will be necessary to convince him, that I have not been imposing upon him *a specious error*, or *a fancifull hypothesis*; grounded on a false notion of human nature; but an historical relation of *the Paganism of modern Rome*; deduced from unquestionable facts, and the clear testimony of Antiquity: and this I shall be able to shew, as far as there will be occasion, from some of the hints already given in my Letter and my Preface.

Every one knows what a perpetual use there was of *Incense* and *sweet Odors*, in all the Temples of the Heathens. *Tertullian* speaks of it, as the distinguishing  
rite

rite of *Paganism* ; and declares, *that Idolatry might sooner be carried on without an Idol, than without Incense* : and for this reason, as he intimates, *if the Perfumers, who furnished this Incense to the Pagan Altars, continued to carry on that trade, after they had embraced the Christian faith, they were to be rejected from the Church* [i]. This was the primitive discipline; before the conversion of *Rome*, when the Church was cautious of admitting into her worship, whatever had any relation to the old Idolatry : yet even in this period, *Gregory Thaumaturgus* is commended by *his namesake of Nissa*, for *changing the Pagan Festivals into Christian Holydays, the better to draw the Heathens to the religion of Christ* [k]. But after the establishment of *Christianity*, when the policy of complying with the popular prejudices began to prevail among the Clergy ; and the Church, as *St. Jerom* says, *declined as much in it's virtue, as it encreased in it's*

[i] Si & nunc etiam sine Idolo opus Idololatriæ incendiis odorum perpetratur——nam facilius sine Idolo, Idololatria, quam sine Turarii merce. Apologet. xi.

[k] Nissen. in vit. Greg. Thaum.

power,



power, we find not onely *the Incense-sellers*, but *the Incense* itself, and *the Thuribulum* taken into the service of *the Christian Altars*, and mentioned by *St. Ambrose* and *St. Chrysostom*, as of common use both in the Eastern and Western Empire [1].

The *Pagans*, as I have shewn, besides the constant use of *lustral water* in their Temples, used to *sprinkle their horses* with it in the *Circensian games*, to preserve them probably from the power of charms or incantations, that might be prepared against them by their adversaries. I have shewn likewise, how, in imitation of that custom, the practice of *sprinkling horses and other animals with Holy-water*, was first introduced among Christians, by the au-

[1] Atque utinam nobis *adolentibus Altaria*, sacrificium deferentibus assistat Angelus, &c. Ambros. in Luc. 1.

Diaconus, — λαβὼν τὸ θυμιατήριον καὶ τὸ θυμίαμα, &c. Chrysost. Liturgia. vid. Beverigii Annot. in Canon. Apost. 3.

Some learned men have asserted the use of *Incense* to be of *Apostolic* institution, from the authority of *the Apostolic Canons*: but the testimony of *Tertullian*, quoted above, clearly shews, that it was not introduced into the Christian worship in his days, and consequently, as other learned have with more judgment infered, that *the Apostolic Canons* were the production of a later age.

thority

thority of *Hilarion, the Monk*; whose peculiar doctrine it was, *that the Devil, out of his great hatred to men, and for the sake of doing them the greater mischief, used to enter even into their cattle, with intent to destroy them* [m]. For when we see so singular a custom continued to this day at *Rome*, by the *Monks of St. Antony*; the Parent of Monkery itself; and the friend and contemporary of *Hilarion*; we cannot think it *a mistake*, to deduce it from an origin; which, from it's great success in that first trial, is said to have drawn *many Pagans to the faith of Christ* [n].

*St. Jerom* takes notice, that *Paganism* had many observances, which, to the reproach even of *Christians*, implied a great strictness of manners and discipline. *Juno*, says he, had her *Priestesses*, devoted to one husband: *Vesta* her perpetual *Virgins*, and other *Idols* their *Priests* also, under vows of

[m] Docebat autem Senex, hominum causa Diabolum etiam jumenta corripere, &c. Hieron. Tom. 4. par. 2. p. 82. Edit. Bened.

[n] Indubitata ergo victoria & illis & multis retrò Circensibus, plurimis fidei occasio fuit. Ibid. p. 80.

*chastity* [o].

*chastity* [o]. To wipe off this reproach therefore from the *Christian Church, Monasteries and Nunneries* began to be multiplied in this age, through all parts of the Christian world, recommended chiefly by the writings and authority of *St. Jerom* [p]. *Vigilantius*, who lived towards the end of the 4th Century, not long after the conversion of Rome, publicly charged the ruling Clergy with *Idolatry and Paganizing*, on the account of several *Heathenish customs*, introduced at that time into the Church; particularly, *the vows of chastity imposed upon the Clergy; the veneration of reliques; and the lighting up of candles to them, in broad day-light.* “ We see, says he, in  
 “ effect, a *Pagan rite* introduced into our  
 “ Churches, under the pretext of religi-  
 “ on; when heaps of *wax candles* are light-

[o] Quid nos oportet facere, in quorum condemnationem habet, & Juno Univiras, & Vesta Virgines, & alia Idola continentes? Ibid. Tom. 4. par. 1. 314. It. par. 2. p. 154, & 744.

[p] Certe flos quidam & preciosissimus lapis inter Ecclesiastica ornamenta, Monachorum & Virginum chorus est. Hier. T. 4. par. 2. p. 551.

Initum est inter Monachos consilium, nam in eodem loco circiter quinque millia diversis cellulis habitabant. ib. p. 44.

“ ed



“ ed up in clear sunshine, and people  
 “ every where kissing and adoring, I know  
 “ not what, contemptible dust, preserved  
 “ in a little vessel, and wrapped up in pre-  
 “ cious linnen. These men do great ho-  
 “ nor truly to the blessed Martyrs, by light-  
 “ ing up *paultry candles* to those, whom  
 “ the Lamb, in the midst of the throne,  
 “ illuminates with all the luster of his  
 “ majesty [q].” *St. Jerom*, who answers  
 him, does not deny the practice, nor it’s  
 being *borrowed from the Pagans*, but de-  
 fends it. *That*, says he, *was once done to*  
*Idols, and was then to be detested; but this is*  
*done to the Martyrs, and is therefore to be*  
*received* [r]. *Vigilantius* appears to have  
 had several *Bishops* and *Presbyters* on his  
 side in this controversy, and particularly  
*Ruffinus*; yet the Church in general was so  
 strongly infected at this time with *Pagan*  
*prejudices*, that his remonstrances were treat-  
 ed with no better terms, than *heretical,*  
*impious, and diabolical* [s].

Upon

[q] Hieron. ib. p. 282.

[r] Illud fiebat Idolis, & idcirco detestandum est : hoc  
 fit Martyribus, & idcirco recipiendum est. Ibid. 284.

[s] Proh nefas ! Episcopos sui sceleris dicitur habere con-  
 sortes. Hieron. adv. Vigil. p. 281. Oper. T. 4. par. 2.

Ego

Upon the conversion of the Empire to the Christian faith, when the Church found itself supported by the laws, and invested with authority; it is natural to imagine, that one of the first acts of her power would be, to render all due honors to the memory of those *Martyrs*, by whose blood she had obtained it. This therefore was the peculiar zeal, and reigning devotion of that age: in consequence of which, it was a kind of fashion for the New Converts, who were of eminent birth and fortunes, to build Churches at their own expense, to the honor of the *Martyrs*, and for a repository of their bones; which, after the manner of the *Pagans*, they affected also to adorn with *paintings*; representing the stories of the Old and New Testament, and especially the acts of those *Martyrs*, to whom the Churches were consecrated; in opposition to the fabulous acts of the *Old Hero's*, or pretended *Deities*, with which the *Heathen Temples* were usually painted.

Thus *Paulinus*, a Convert from Paganism, of Senatorian rank, celebrated for his parts and learning, and who died after-

R

wards

wards *Bishop of Nola*, rebuilt in a splendid manner his Episcopal Church, dedicated to *Felix the Martyr*; on whose portico's were painted the miracles of *Moses* and of *Christ*, together with the acts of *Felix*, and the other *Martyrs*, whose *reliques* were there deposited. He gives a short description of these paintings in one of his Poems; where to obviate an objection, that might probably be made to this *new and unusual method*, as he calls it, of painting Churches, he says; " that it was done with a design, " to draw the rude multitude, habituated " to the profane rites of Paganism, to a " knowledge and good opinion of the Christian doctrine; by learning from these " pictures, what they were not capable of " learning from books, the lives and acts " of the Christian Saints [ *t* ]." Thus

*Sul-*

[*t*] Forte requiratur quam ratione gerendi,  
Sederit hæc nobis sententia, pingere sanctas  
Raro more domos, animantibus adsimulatis.  
Accipite, & paucis tentabo exponere causas,  
Quos agat huc Sancti Felicis gloria cœtus  
Obscurum nulli; sed turba frequentior his est  
Rusticitas non cassa fide, neque docta legendi.  
Hæc adsueta diu sacris servire profanis  
Ventre Deo, tandem convertitur advena Christo,  
Dum sanctorum opera in Christo miratur aperta.  
Cernite quam multi coeant ex omnibus agris, &c.

Vid. S. Paulini Oper. Nat. ix.

*Pope*



*Sulpicius* also, another noble Convert, and *Paulinus's* friend, built two *Basilica's*, or spacious Churches, with a *Baptistery* between them, in which was painted, on the one side, *St. Martin*, whose life also he wrote; and on the other, his living friend *Paulinus* [u].

Thus were *pictures* or *Images* introduced into the Christian Church, about the end of the 4th, or the beginning of the 5th Century, by the *Pagan Converts*; who seem to have vied with each other, in the magnificence of building, adorning, and painting the Churches of the several Mar-

*Pope Gregory*, called the *Great*, about two centuries later, makes the same apology also for *Images* or *Pictures* in Churches; declaring them to have been introduced for the sake of the *Pagans*; that those, who did not know, and could not read the Scriptures, might learn from them what they ought to worship. Unde & præcipue *Gentibus* pro lectione, pictum est, &c. Epist. l. 9. c. 9.

[u] Recte enim in loco refectionis humanæ *Martinus* pingitur, qui cœlestis hominis imaginem perfecta Christi imitatione portavit; ut deponentibus in lavacro terrenæ imaginis vetustatem, imitanda cœlestis animæ occurrat effigies. Nostræ vero quis illic locus est, &c. Vid. ib. Epist. ad Sever. xii.

tyrs [x]. Their design was, to do honor to the memory of those *Martyrs*; and to edify the people by the example of their lives; but above all, as *Paulinus*, one of the first Introducers of them, declares;  
 “ to draw the Heathens the more easily  
 “ to the faith of Christ, since by flock-  
 “ ing in crouds to gaze at the finery of  
 “ these paintings, and by explaining to  
 “ each other the stories there represented;  
 “ they would gradually acquire a reverence  
 “ for that religion, which inspired so much  
 “ virtue and piety into it's professors.”  
 But these compliances, as *Bishop Stillingfleet* observes, were attended with very bad consequences; since *Christianity became at last, by that means, to be nothing else but reformed Paganism, as to it's divine worship* [y]: and as the learned *Mr. Turretin*

[x] Tu vero etiam Baptisterium Basilicis duabus interpositum condidisti; ut nos in horum quoque operum, quæ visibiliter extruuntur, ædificatione superares. Sed Domino gratias, qui dedit nobis in quo & vinci victoriam ducere-mus. Vid. *ibid.*

[y] See *Bishop Stillingfleet's* Defence of the charge of Idolatry against the Romanists. Vol. 5th of his Works, p. 459. in which learned and excellent Treatise, the reader will find this whole question examined to the bottom, and demonstrably proved against the Church of *Rome*.

also,

also, describing the state of Christianity in this very age, says ; “ the Empire was  
 “ brought over to the faith, but the  
 “ Church also infected with the pomp of  
 “ the Empire : the *Pagans* were con-  
 “ verted to Christ, but the worship of  
 “ Christ also depraved to the fashion of  
 “ *Paganism* [z].”

I need not trouble the reader with any more testimonies of this sort, which the writers of all times would abundantly furnish : the facts already produced sufficiently prove, that it is *no mistake* to affirm, *that the Catholic borrowed from the Heathen* ; or that *Pagan ceremonies* were introduced into the Church, while there were *strong prejudices subsisting* in favor of them : which, from these beginnings, have been operating in it ever since, with more or less effect, in proportion to the decay of it's discipline, and the corruption of it's rulers, till they have perfected that form and Sy-

[z] Imperio ad fidem adducto, sed & Imperii pompa Ecclesiam inficiente : Ethnicis ad Christum conversis, sed & Christi religione ad Ethnicæ formam depravata, &c. Orat. Academ. De variis Christ. Rel. fati.



stem of worship, which we now distinguish by the name of *Popery*.

From this view then of the question, as it is now placed in it's true light, it appears impossible, in any sense whatsoever, *that the Papists could be originals*, in their use of those ceremonies. From the first promulgation of the Gospel, as all history informs us, there was a perpetual contest between *the Pagan and Christian rites*, through a long succession of ages ; in which *the Pagan rites* were forcibly imposed upon the Christians, by the *Pagan Emperors* ; rejected again in their turn by *the Christian Emperors* ; and all of them distinctly marked out and described at different times by the *Imperial laws*, so as the Christians in all ages might clearly know and avoid them. For example ; the laws of *Theodosius*, as I have already observed, forbid all people, under severe penalties, *to light up candles, burn incense, or hang up garlands to senseless images* [a]. Now these laws, from the  
time

[a] Nullus omnino—in nullo penitus loco, in nulla urbe, sensu carentibus simulacris—accendat lumina, imponat tura, ferta suspendat, &c. Vid. Jac. Gothofred. De Stat. Paganor. Leg. 12. p. 15: Not-

time of their publication, have been in the constant possession of the *Romish Church*; perpetually read, commented and published by their Clergy [b]; so that, when the particular rites, therein prohibited, were introduced into the Christian worship, in

Notwithstanding this prohibition of the ceremonies, here specified, to the Pagans, it is very remarkable, that they were actually in use in the *Christian Church*, at the same time, and under the same Emperor, as it appears by the testimonies produced above. This was the effect of a political compliance with the *Pagan prejudices*, that the Pagans, when no longer allowed to perform their favorite rites to their Idols, might be induced the more easily to embrace the faith of Christ, by a liberty of performing them at the altars, and to the honor of the Martyrs; where there was no application of them however to Idols or Images, which, though they now began to be introduced into the Church, yet had no religious worship paid to them in this age. But after so large a concession, it was not easy to stop, till the whole pageantry of the old Idolatry was restored, as we now see it exercised in *Popish countries*, with all its pomp of candles, Incense, garlands, &c. applied again directly to the worship of senseless Images.

[b] *Paulinus*, the Bishop of *Nola*, above-mentioned, published a sort of *Panegyric* upon the Emperor *Theodosius*, containing a particular defence or Apology for his laws: In relation to which, *St. Jerom*, in a letter to him, says; *Happy Theodosius, who has such an Orator of Christ for his Defender. You have illustrated his dignity, and consecrated the utility of his laws to future ages.* Hieron. ad Paul. Op. T. 4. p. 567. init.

what

what age soever we should suppose it to have happened, the introducers could not be ignorant of their being *Pagan rites*; and consequently could not be *originals*, or inventors, but, as I have affirmed in my Letter, the *mere borrowers* of them from their *Pagan Ancestors*.

I will not pursue this point any farther, how much soever the occasion may invite me. I have no desire to enter into controversy with any man; much less with one, whose friendship I value, and whose uncommon abilities I shall always esteem. What I have thrown together hastily in this Postscript, will be considered, I hope, as a necessary act of defense; not due so much to myself, as to the judgement of the public, and the merit of an old argument, that has long been of service to the Protestant cause; and which, in all ages of the Church, if it had been attended to, as it ought, would have prevented the admission of those corruptions, which, at this day, so grossly deform the simplicity of the Christian worship, through the greatest part of the Christian world.

F I N





